

# THE LIVING AGE

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## A WEEK OF THE WORLD

### HOW SHALL WE DISARM?

Now that the German elections are over and Europe seems to have set out at last on a definite path to economic reconstruction, the next question promises to be, How shall we disarm? Shall it be under the Geneva Protocol and the aegis of the League of Nations, with France and the Continental Powers casting the deciding vote, or shall it be by an independent conference—possibly a second Washington Conference—with the United States officially present and the English-speaking Powers holding the initiative? Possibly Great Britain would prefer the latter course, and the drift of events during the past two months—especially since the British and American elections—has been in its favor.

As soon as the result of the polling in England last October was known, British editors began to discuss this question. There was a feeling that Ramsay MacDonald had been betrayed by his internationalist sympathies and his close touch with Continental Labor into endorsing a League policy that overaccentuated the European, as

compared with the Imperial, interests of the British Commonwealth. The London *Outlook* expressed this feeling when it said:—

We support the League of Nations, as a visible instrument of that good-will. But we say quite frankly that we do not think the League can bear the weight of responsibility which the late Government was inclined to place upon its shoulders. The League is still a child, and it cannot yet bear the burdens of a man, far less of a supernational State. To ignore the League is to withdraw from Europe; to expect the League to control Europe is to court disappointment, and perhaps disaster.

Britain is, and must remain, a European Power; but it is more a World Power than a European Power. The British Empire is a fact, and a fact of more importance to us than the Continent. It follows, then, that our foreign policy will be based on the Empire rather than Europe. It will envisage the whole world, not merely our immediate neighbors.

This consideration necessarily implies greater coöperation with the Dominions, a common defense-policy, the consideration of an improved transport-policy by sea and air, and at least the beginnings of an Imperial economic policy.

Speaking particularly of the Protocol signed at Geneva last September, the *Spectator* said: —

A Franco-German understanding is so necessary to both countries that it is sooner or later inevitable. It may be delayed, but it must come. That the French are eager for it was very plain at Geneva. It need not lead to a Continental Bloc. It would not, in my opinion, if the foreign policy of the British Labor Government were continued, but it will lead to it if there is any great change in that policy. Many people here, as in France, believe, rightly or wrongly, that the traditional English policy is to keep Germany and France apart — that, although England does not wish them to be enemies, she prefers that they should not be too close friends. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald shook that belief for the first time. It was recognized that his policy was not the old one of the balance of power, but one of genuine international coöperation. Should England return to the policy of Lord Curzon or anything resembling it, the belief will be revived and there will grow up here as strong a determination as in France not to allow England any longer to be the arbiter of the Continent. That means the Continental Bloc.

After reviewing in detail the most serious criticisms launched against the Protocol in Great Britain, however, this journal pleads for caution: —

We do not believe that it would be in the interests of this country to see the formation of a homogeneous European bloc, bound together by such ties as those of the Protocol, but excluding the British Empire. The ideal of the Empire as a self-contained unit cut off from the rest of the world is not, in our opinion, either a practical or a desirable one. We are still bound by the most intimate commercial relations with the Continent of Europe, and it is quite impossible to sever those bonds, at any rate for many, many years. While they exist British interests will be deeply affected by all that happens in Europe, and no British Government will find it possible to avoid

playing a part, and — for good or ill — a great part in the affairs of the outside world.

It is significant, too, that the result of the English general election was hailed with joy by anti-Leaguists and antipacifists in every country. The Fascist *Popolo d'Italia*, the Conservative-Clerical *Écho de Paris*, the Junker *Kreuzzeitung*, and the German-Fascist *Deutsche Tageszeitung* were of the same mind on that question, believing, perhaps prematurely, that the triumph of the Conservatives meant the death of the Protocol. This enthusiasm was chilled somewhat by Mr. Baldwin's more than kindly reference to the Herriot Ministry and its policies at the Guildhall banquet. Some prophets imagine that the formation of a Continental Bloc to which the Geneva Protocol might open the way is likely to be hastened by the advent of a Conservative Ministry.

Robert Dell, writing from Berlin to the *New Statesman*, believes that 'from the point of view of Germany there is something to be said for the opinion that a good understanding with France is more important than one with England — indeed, if I were a German, I should take that view if the choice had to be made.' According to the same correspondent — and his opinion is supported by that of many others — the French were really working for such an understanding at Geneva. But would it lead to a Continental Bloc whose interests would run counter to those of Great Britain, and possibly those of the United States? We quote Mr. Dell further on this point: —

It must be admitted that that document seems to stand a very poor chance of ratification in the present Parliament. There is a small group of Conservatives who are definitely opposed to the League of Nations and all its acts, and who will oppose the Protocol in any case. But the majority of

the Unionist Party has always been friendly to the League, and as anxious to attain the ideal of international peace as any other party. If this main body were united in support of the Protocol its acceptance would be assured. But as a matter of fact it is already evident that some of the most progressive and influential minds in the Unionist Party are actively opposed to the Protocol. They do not attack it from the extreme Nationalist or Imperialist point of view, but rather assert that the Protocol is not the proper way of achieving the common ideal of international peace.

*The Nation and the Athenaeum* believed that a flat rejection of the Protocol, 'unaccompanied by alternative proposals, would be interpreted as a refusal to coöperate in any scheme for providing collective security,' and urged the Government, acting in conjunction with the Dominions, to consider the possibility of amendments that would enable them to ratify it. A rumor that the Government would throw over the Protocol offhand received sufficient credit to draw forth an official denial from the Ministry. But the Government did ask the Council of the League of Nations to postpone the discussion of that agreement, which was originally set for December 8, until the new Cabinet could consult with the Dominions.

Naturally so important a commitment of policy as the Protocol involves has provoked a lively debate in the British political world as well as in the press, some phases of which have not lacked a touch of acrimony. Lord Parmoor, who represented Great Britain at the League Assembly last September, where the Protocol was adopted, wrote a letter to the *Times* in which he intimated that the criticism of the Protocol came from persons who really objected to the principle of the League of Nations as such. This led the *Spectator* to protest that many ardent supporters of the League were fright-

ened by the dangers they believed they detected in that agreement. They might exaggerate these dangers, but their alarm was sincere:—

There is Lord Grey of Fallodon, for example, who has come to the conclusion that the Protocol does, in effect, place the British Navy at the disposal of an International Court. He regards that as an impossible policy. Nevertheless he does not advocate the rejection of the Protocol without the most careful inquiry and an earnest attempt to save all that is good in it. Whatever happens, 'Great Britain must carry the Dominions with her.' On the other hand he hopes that the Dominions will not severally reject the Protocol without full consultations with Great Britain. After all, to meet the Protocol with a mere negative would make the proposed Disarmament Conference impossible and would produce a very bad international atmosphere.

Among the most notable contributions to this debate is a letter by Gilbert Murray, published in the London *Times* of December 18, in answer to a suggestion by Sir Valentine Chirol that perhaps Great Britain ought to repudiate the entire League Covenant so far as it involves responsibility for preventing war. He considers that such an act would be madness. Referring to the attitude of the United States, which received a prominent place in this discussion, Professor Murray said:—

American public opinion is a matter on which I have long ceased to prophesy or dogmatize; but, as far as the difference between the Protocol and the Covenant is concerned, such information as I have leads me to think that American public opinion, whether pro-League or anti-League, rather welcomes the adoption by Europe of a proposal—largely suggested and pressed by an American committee—for the 'outlawry of war.' No one asks, or expects, America to sign the Protocol. Hardly anyone expects her within meas-

urable time to accept the full obligations of the Covenant; if she will keep the peace in her own regions of the globe and not prevent the European nations from keeping the peace in theirs, she will be doing a great deal.

But there is one point on which I, for one, feel perfectly clear: the League is a great organization founded to meet both a permanent world-wide need and a pressing specific danger. It would be a fatal and, I venture to think, a degrading mistake for members of the League to forget their great purpose and allow their action to be paralyzed at every step by nervously waiting on the movements of American public opinion. I can hardly conceive any course less likely to win the confidence or respect of America.

Henri de Jouvenel, writing in *Le Matin*, considers it inconceivable that France should abandon the Protocol even if Great Britain should fail to ratify it. 'England,' he says, 'is part of a different circle from our own — a circle that lies outside of Europe and is called the British Empire. And she is a country with limited powers. . . . Her engagements are of little value unless her Dominions ratify them, for she is a minority in the Empire.' Consequently Europe cannot wait upon a British decision. The Continent cannot have its destinies determined by Australia. Let France ratify the Protocol without regard to what other countries may do, in the same courageous way that Czechoslovakia has already done.

While the Protocol is hanging in the balance, the possibility of a second Disarmament Conference called under the auspices of Washington hovers on the horizon. Some political prognosticators interpret the coming American manœuvres in the Pacific, the revival of the plan for a great naval base at Singapore, and the programme for extensive additions to Great Britain's cruiser fleet, as preliminary gestures

made with such an eventuality in view. *L'Echo de Paris* remarks: —

The fate of the disarmament congress that was decided upon at Geneva last September being doubtful, since the Protocol upon which it depends is not likely to be ratified immediately, several English journals have been hinting that the situation might be saved if President Coolidge and Mr. Hughes would take the matter up on their own initiative, quite independently of the Protocol.

The difficulty is, according to *L'Echo de Paris*, that Washington is mainly interested in naval disarmament, while the Continent is primarily interested in reducing land forces.

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#### THE ROTOR SHIP

ANTON FLETTNER's invention of a new device substituting vertical revolving cylinders for sails on vessels, by which it is claimed that ten or fifteen times as much power is derived from the wind as in the case of ordinary sails, has been given sensational publicity, not only in the German, but also in the other Continental and the British press.

If the new invention accomplishes what is claimed, it will revolutionize the merchant marine of every country, and restore the windjammer — or perhaps we shall have to say hereafter 'windtwister' — to its old supremacy on the water, with an immense cheapening of the cost of ocean transportation. A small auxiliary engine driving an electric motor is enough to spin the cylinders, which resemble overgrown smokestacks.

Anton Flettner is a distinguished engineer who has already made notable inventions. He first became prominent for his investigations in aërodynamics during the war, when he made some notable improvements in the steering apparatus of airplanes. The Flettner

rudder, which is also applied to vessels, operates on the principle of steering the big rudder by a smaller pilot-rudder that can be manipulated by hand, thus doing away with the expensive and power-consuming apparatus formerly needed to guide a large ship. It was while experimenting upon a similar device for trimming sails to the wind that Flettner hit upon the idea of applying the Magnus Effect to the propulsion of vessels.

The physical law involved in the theory of the cylinder sail is not a new discovery, but Flettner apparently is entitled to credit for its first practical application. When the wind strikes a revolving cylinder, the effect of the increased air-friction on one side and the absence of friction on the other side is to concentrate the wind pressure in one direction, and to render it many times more powerful than when exerted against an equal sail area. Mr. Flettner described the genesis of his invention to an interviewer as follows: —

I studied air currents first in the Zeppelin works, and Count Zeppelin was among the first to recognize the importance of this type of research. I devised a new rudder for airships, but conditions for aircraft were so bad after the war in Germany that I accepted a post as director of the Institute for Aéro- and Hydro-Dynamics in Amsterdam, where I applied my aerial experiments in steering gear to craft in the water. While I was working there I still continued experiments in the technical laboratories of the University of Göttingen. It was during these experiments that I recalled results achieved seventy years ago by the forerunner of Helmholtz, Professor Magnus, relating to the velocity of shots fired and the extraordinary effect of wind on violently rotating bodies. This is known to physicists as the 'Magnus Effect.' Till now nobody thought of turning this theoretical knowledge to practical use. This we have done to-day. Next year a tower will be erected

just outside Berlin, as well as several towers in Holland, for the purpose of generating electricity from air.

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#### THE FUTURE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

ACCORDING to *Le Temps*, Constantinople is a dying city. Its formerly busy harbor is deserted, banks will loan money only on exorbitant terms, big business houses are liquidating their affairs and closing their doors. Foreigners are leaving en masse, or — as in case of the Greeks and Armenians — are being expelled by the authorities; and even part of the Mussulman population is migrating to Anatolia in the hope of bettering its condition.

Constantinople suffered severely during the succession of wars that began with the Balkan conflict in 1912 and only ended with the defeat of the Greeks last year. A series of conflagrations, the ravages of which could not be repaired in the prevailing unsettlement, has swept away more than one fifth of the city. Revolution and civil war have practically extinguished the Black Sea trade; and Constantinople, like Vienna, is suffering from the shrinkage of the territories of which it formerly was the commercial centre. Last of all, the departure of 300,000 Greeks and Armenians, like the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and the Huguenots from France, has prostrated important economic activities of the city. Meanwhile Constantinople's rivals are profiting by the distress of their old competitor. Alexandria, Beirut, Piraeus, and Saloniki are no longer simple satellites of the metropolis on the Bosphorus, but are rapidly becoming independent trade-centres.

Notwithstanding this discouraging situation, however, correspondents point out that the causes of the present depression are political and transitory, while the natural advantage that

has made Constantinople great — her strategic situation at a focus of land and sea routes — remains unaffected, and they confidently predict her ultimate revival.

# COMMUNISM IN THE NETHERLANDS INDIES

AN Advisory Council, or *Volksraad*, was established a few years ago in the Netherlands Indies. This body, which is appointive and includes both natives and Europeans, does not possess legislative powers, but it debates and adopts resolutions upon the budget and proposed ordinances which have moral weight with the Governor-General.

The present Volksraad contains a Social-Democratic member who, in a recent address to that body, reported in the Amsterdam Labor paper, *Het Volk*, discussed the status of Communism in Java. The subject is of direct interest to Americans, for kindred agitation exists in the Philippines and indeed throughout the Orient. Among other things Counselor Stokvis said: —

Asiatic Communism is far less an economic doctrine than a Nationalist agitation.

#### UNDER PAWES'S HAT



## A Communist Election Cartoon Satirizing the Central Parties. — *Die Rote Fahne*

... In fact, Communism here is essentially Nationalist, and it is easy to understand that in view of the slight consideration that its aspirations receive among ourselves it should attach great importance to international connections. The last Communist Congress disclosed plainly an effort to get in touch with the Sun Yat-sen movement in China, in order to draw strength from it.

#### MINOR NOTES

ACCORDING to *Yamato*, Manchuria is becoming populated with American spies, says the *Japan Chronicle*. 'Military tourists, officers, consuls, journalists, are all in the same game.' The Americans are said to have been working in the interests of their Chihli friends, the defeated Wu Pei-fu's Party, and *Yamato* believes that their intrigues are extending to Korea. The *Japan Chronicle* comments: 'It sounds very dreadful, but it would be interesting to hear what Japan is doing that *Yamato* does not like Americans to see.'

NEW ZEALAND magistrates are now imprisoning without option of a fine all drivers who are drunk while in control of vehicles.

## HE BROKE UP THE PROCESSION



**OFFICER TO MAGISTRATE.** He shouted, 'Long Live the Republic!' during our patriotic parade.  
— *Arbeiter Zeitung*

# LONDON THE MIGHTY

## I. AS SEEN BY A GERMAN PACIFIST

BY ALFONS PAQUET

From *Frankfurter Zeitung*, October 4, 8, 12  
(LIBERAL DAILY)

WHILE my train was crossing the green meadows of Zealand, and the clouds kept growing heavier and brighter, I read Worringer's little pamphlet 'German Youth and the Spirit of the East.' It is a protest against that preoccupation with Slavic thought and ideals that began in Germany even before the war and has not yet ceased. Is this booklet a symptom of a reaction already manifest beneath the surface of public opinion in our country? Our statesmen again seem to be turning toward the West and to envision our future in the League of Nations. . . .

My mind was occupied by these thoughts as I journeyed toward London to the Democratic Peace Conference called by the leaders of an influential pacifist group of French Catholics. The previous Congress was held at Freiburg under the chairmanship of Marc Sangnier. This deep longing for peace in contemporary Europe is a symptom of its absence. . . .

At Vlissingen I boarded a broad, freshly painted steamer that leaves exactly on schedule and ploughs placidly across the sea. When I was a young man I once left Vlissingen on a boat delayed till midnight. It was one of those little steamers, long since out of service in our part of the world, that are still to be met with in the Grecian archipelago. Her steam-exhausts made a deafening roar. Mingled odors of hyacinths and red herring, on their way to the morning market in London, filled

the air. Certainly there is improvement here. Traveling has become more comfortable. A spacious gangway lands one directly in the carpeted corridors of my present boat, and her cabins and dining-room are most inviting.

The Belgian coast vanished in a soft pastel band, and a hard silvery glitter lay on the water. Travelers clustered in their deck chairs along the lee deck — well-clad people wrapped in rain-coats of subdued hues. Several young men wore nets to keep their smoothly brushed hair from blowing in the wind. Knickerbockers, bright-ribbed woolen stockings, handsome low shoes, and sickly looking women, were the dominant note in the party. An evening of marvelous colors — a grass-green sea, clouds of crimson gold above the chalk cliffs of England, the revolving light that marks the entrance of Dover Harbor! Already the continent behind us was wrapped in darkness, but the English coast was still luminous with a soft twilight afterglow.

I met on board the steamer a gentleman who was very optimistic as to the future of Europe, including Germany, and of Asia, including Palestine. It was a new experience, that seemed to harmonize well with the cheerful English coast we were approaching. I met the same gentleman again in the crowd under the bright lights of Victoria Station. A great fleet of black automobiles with nickel trimmings stood close to the railway platform, and our luggage was

lifted directly into them from the train. It is very pleasant, when arriving in a big town, to know just where one is to stop. I was not in that happy position, but the door of the automobile of the optimistic gentleman opened to receive me until I found a room in some hotel of the crowded city.

It was late Saturday evening, but the magnificent flower-beds in front of Buckingham Palace were brightly lighted, and the Strand offered a charming alternation of brilliant show-windows and masses of deep shadow. The porter of a large hotel gave me a card to the porter of a smaller establishment, the ground floor of which was occupied by a Chinese restaurant. After a hasty handshake with my kind acquaintance in the automobile, I found myself following a servant up four flights of stairs to a little room with single-board partitions. It was evidently one of several into which a hall, adorned with stucco ornaments, had been subdivided. I sat down in my little cell, breathless and bewildered, wondering if I could possibly have reached such a tiny nook through an ordinary door — a more appropriate access would have been through a wicket.

Every morning huge sight-seeing automobiles fill every available space near Parliament House. Each carries about sixty people — country folks who have come to London to see the Wembley Exposition. Buses roll past, automobiles glide by, policemen stand at each corner, controlling the traffic with inimitable skill and steadiness. In front of the black stone portals of Whitehall, traditional red uniforms still add their brilliant touch of color, as if khaki had never existed. In the courtyard of that ancient palace Redcoats with high bearskin caps, mounted on black horses with white harness, are

paraded to the delight of a crowd of sight-seers. Handsome posters decorate the street walls of this building, soliciting recruits for the Royal Welsh, the Coldstream Guards, and the Irish Fusiliers.

Three streets pour their traffic through a quadrant around Trafalgar Square; water plashes in the fountain in front of the Nelson Column and its lions. Flocks of pigeons as gray as London itself circle and flutter above a crowd of people who have paused on a corner to read a lofty newspaper bulletin. The rusty black, weathered marble monument of a general has on its pedestal the British coat of arms, with a lion and a harp. These stand out in the bright light as sharply as an etching.

London is a mighty triptych, an imposing image of a stratified, unshakably secure society. At one end is the banner-colored West, with its perennially green parks, where innocent sheep pasture, and silhouettes of white, distant towers suggest romantic memories of far-away Indian towns; with Westminster Abbey surrounded by the black bronze monuments of statesmen, each standing in its little reserve of green turf, and with gray palaces, whose architectural details are set into relief by trimmings of chalk white or of a peculiar brownish black.

In the middle lies the City, whose narrow, crooked streets almost submerge the same black-and-white architecture of Old London.

Last of all comes the East End, interminable stretches of gloomy brick cells, endless forests of smutty chimney-pots plumed with black smoke, thickets of masts behind unending walls of wharf sheds and warehouses: the East End, with its melancholy but noisy street life, with its hand-organs and sordid stench of rancid frying fish, with its unnumbered bars squatting beneath great golden signs and behind

windows of frosted glass, pouring forth odors of smoky gin, bitter porter, sour ale, and streams of watery-eyed, carmine-faced patrons. And through this immeasurable triptych run lines of red auto buses, like crimson ribbons tying the parts together, while an army of policemen, mighty in its repose and discipline, keeps them from falling asunder.

Our Peace Congress met in Central Hall, an auditorium of the Methodist Church, as modern and modest as its name. The building is gray like the old hospital opposite, and stands almost too close to classic Westminster Abbey to suit the sentiments of some Englishmen of stern Nonconformist principles. In the vestibule, flooded with light from concealed electric bulbs, hang portraits of Queen Victoria and King George. About a hundred Frenchmen and possibly half as many Germans were in attendance. Both nationalities were filled with an abundance of goodwill. Both hope to better even the kindly atmosphere that prevailed at last year's assembly, which so many heralded as the first step toward a new Europe. The English delegates were not so prominent relatively as the foreign visitors. The list of patrons, to be sure, contained many illustrious names, but Great Britain is not thrilled with our Continental passion for peace. Her people may be equally eager for that blessing, but they express it in a cool, matter-of-fact way. I was conscious of a touch of the Geneva atmosphere, with its portfolio idealism and diplomatic reserve. Here and there I spied the green turban of an Indian delegate, or the modest bonnet of a Quakeress.

Each delegate on his arrival found awaiting him a letter containing a list of invitations to the private luncheons, teas, and dinners that formed a lively background to the Conference. These afforded an opportunity to make many

interesting acquaintances, and to hear much stimulating conversation. They also opened the way to little private excursions and family calls, and to visits to the public institutions that had thrown their doors open to the delegates. The Ministry of Public Works gave us an evening reception at Lancaster House, an old roomy palace formerly occupied by a family of the high nobility, and now converted to public uses. It contains a city museum where the court dresses of royalty, knightly orders and decorations, and other mementoes of interest to local visitors, are displayed in glass cases. I discovered in a side room several pottery mugs dug up in Cheapside in the seventeenth century. There was no label to show their origin, but they were well preserved *Bartmann* steins from the neighborhood of Cologne, probably from some Cheapside drinking-place patronized by Hansa merchants.

Norman Angell presided at the opening session of the Congress. He is a slender cosmopolitan, an example of the type of modern author whose keen insight lends him a gift of prophecy. His introductory remarks dwelt upon the rapid progress of a European movement for peace and coöperation that a few years ago would have seemed impossible.

The next speaker was a Frenchman, Marc Sangnier. He interwove with his remarks a message of greeting from the Pope, and expressed the hope that Russia was on the eve of a democratic dawn.

After him Dr. Stocky of Cologne spoke in much the same tone as his predecessor, but with a shade less sympathy for Russia, which he thought belonged to Asia. As if Japan, which has sat in the League Council from the first, were not even more decidedly part of Asia. His remarks betrayed an astonishingly robust and, so to

speak, stabilized attitude of mind, in view of Germany's present spiritual groping.

Beyond question this Congress represents a definite step toward a coöperative agreement between Catholic ethics and enlightened Liberalism. A paper was read at one of the last sessions that evidently had a propaganda purpose; it was a plea to Catholics to support the peace doctrine of the Pope. This did rouse a little flurry. There are no more outspoken people in the world than elderly English gentlemen of the Free Church type of mind, and there is nothing more embarrassing than the unambiguity of the traditional parliamentary practice that governs all British public gatherings. Put both together and you can have an awkward situation. For a moment it looked as if the Congress might shipwreck on the reef of confessional differences, but the courageous and persuasive appeal of a Quakeress steered it clear of this peril.

It was my privilege to be the guest of a family whose head spends his days with the utmost regularity at a scientific library in his charge. His residence is between the library building and an old church in a quiet square in the heart of London. The library is supported by an endowment established two hundred years ago, and its privileges are open to a respectable public of clergymen and students. The old gentleman's morning begins with a glance through the newspaper under the trees in the square, which throw their green shadow into the windows of his home. Promptly at eight o'clock a bell summons him to his daily duties. He presides at morning prayers and a breakfast where all the members of the family are expected to be present. Half an hour later the company breaks up. My host goes to his office, to the smokeless bridge of his smokeless ship, laden with its cargo of books and of begrimed

— but not dusty — portraits of its forgotten founders and former commanders. He presides over a treasure of mediæval theological literature, of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin texts, of carefully preserved manuscripts from the time of Wycliffe, of a death mask of Cromwell, of the minutes of forgotten religious gatherings, and of a complete but never-disturbed collection of the writings of Jakob Böhme.

The well-attended meetings of the Peace Conference were lively and exciting events compared with the absolute peace of this quiet domestic circle, which perpetuates a rare and beautiful fragment of Old England. Mornings an impatient eagerness to plunge into the life and movement of the great metropolis, and evenings a surfeit of Congress speeches, drove me out of this cozy, snug harbor to see the town. I know of no better way to re-burnish one's rusty memories of London than from the top of a bus. The centre of the city seems to have grown brighter and more imposing. Several places that I recalled vividly, on account of their association with Dickens, are now occupied by new structures like Australia House, with its proud gray facade and immense plate-glass windows.

At one corner between the British Museum and Tottenham Court Road I once used invariably to meet the sickly-sweetish smell of a marmalade factory, mingled with unappetizing odors from a soap works. To-day even the universal smell of rubber coats has vanished from the streets, leaving nothing but the dry fragrance of shag tobacco. I always think of shag tobacco as the beard of the beardless. Ah, the powerful, all-pervading, almost animal-like odor of the crimply-cut brown weed that rises from ten times a hundred thousand stubby pipes in London! Another characteristic city smell that has

not been obliterated by modern progress is the peculiar mixture of scents from strong tea, gas stoves, and pastries in the invariably crowded A.B.C. tearooms.

Every conceivable type of automobile has now replaced the brightly varnished coaches, victorias, and breaks that formerly lined Oxford Street. The cinemas along that avenue, with their big hotel-like vestibules and lofty-ceilinged halls, have become surprisingly sumptuous. I saw in one of them, presented with supreme technical perfection, an absorbing picture of a sea fight on board a modern battleship, interwoven with a love romance between a Japanese lady and a British naval officer. Sly propaganda for the fleet!

Never is the city more impressive than at night. London does not cast a brilliant reflection against the clouds; the darknesses of the immense metropolis are hidden behind electric advertisements that dazzle the eyes. These electrical signs, a couple of black, gold-bordered smoke-clouds, the silent river with its dumpy, half-lighted bridges — that is all one sees at night.

My bus darted like an arrow down almost deserted streets; a stop at two or three connecting points, and I could already catch the peculiar, depressing East London fetor of smouldering rags and wet stones. A line of red lanterns along the pavement marked some excavation. We coursed interminably down the Old Kent Road to dark, suburban-like Southwell Hill, where I alighted and turned back on foot.

About nine o'clock the miserable little fish-shops, which punctuate the obscure façades of the long tenement rows like big lamps, are crowded with women and children carrying dishes and baskets. Even as late as ten o'clock children play on the pavements, and weary, dowdy women sit on the steps

of their tiny, unlighted houses, whose windows glint vacant and dusty into the darkness. Women also gather in clusters on the street corners. Silhouettes of men stand out in front of brightly lighted soup and baked-potato caravans. Candy stores and fruit shops are still open. In the middle of a row of darkened show windows electric lights shine brightly on the varnished coffin of an undertaking parlor. All these little details stand out sharp and ruthless, as they do in China.

Until eleven o'clock the corner pubs are packed with humanity. Each has three or more entrances leading to a little narrow room separated from the private bar by a light partition extending from the wall to the counter. The bartender with his barmaids presides in the middle of this horseshoe counter, directing things in a fog of tobacco smoke and whiskey fumes. Men stand as closely together on the sawdust-covered floor as their half-drained glasses on the wet, narrow ledge in front of them. Dirty hands empty again and again the pot of highly salted shrimps beside the door.

Sauntering along I entered a little circus building in front of a bright arc-lamp on Blackfriar's Road. A prize fight was on, and only men were present. The crowd took an active part in the proceedings with its cheering, laughing, and whistling. It seemed to me a very rough sort of fight. The boxers' bare bodies glistened with perspiration. One of them was bleeding profusely and hardly able to stand, but the thing was kept up to the twelfth round. It was a bit of Old England, of the rough and ready sports of a sailor race, whose nerves have lost their sensitiveness in stern battle with the elements.

I opened a copy of the *Evening News* under a street light. Among advertisements of fashion sales, suicides, wrecks, sporting news, accounts of the Prince of

Wales in Canada, and dispatches from the battlefield around Shanghai, was hidden a notice to the effect that the British Navy looked with disfavor upon the idea of being made a policeman for the League of Nations.

A highly colored, well-printed poster advertising the Wembley Exposition faced me. Its crude design represented a procession of the men who had built the Empire: sailors, statesmen, commanders, historical uniforms, Indians and Boers fighting under the British flag. Wembley itself lies outside the city, as the moon revolves outside the earth, but it throws back on London the reflected light of the whole British cosmos magnified a thousandfold. The bus line thither runs for some distance through a meadow landscape, and terminates at a little suburb that has evidently long lain within the greater circuit of the metropolis. Every minute brings a new fleet of automobiles and auto buses to the entrance. Naturally I saw the famous relief maps in the Administration Building, the military relics of the War Department, the bazaars of the Indian section, redolent of sandalwood and jasmine, the gigantic peek-boxes of the Canadian Pacific Railcad, and the commonplace grotesqueness of the side shows.

In one of the smaller pavilions, next to an electric milker which was working on a stuffed cow, I noticed with interest a little glass house where a lavish collection of books and cheap pamphlets was displayed. It proved to be a propaganda station of the British-Israel World Federation. The purpose of this unique branch of popular literature was to prove by an imposing mass of unverified citations from philology, history, philosophy, meteorology, symbolism, and race theology, that the Anglo-Saxons are descended from the lost tribes of Israel. Fifty arguments

were advanced to prove this: definite prophecies in the Bible of the greatness of the British Empire and its fleet; the descent of the English royal house from King David; the special interest that the Apostle Paul showed for the British; the relation of the Irish to the Prophet Jeremiah, of the Scotch to the Scythians, of the Saxons to the sons of Isaac, and of the Union Jack to the name of the patriarch Jacob; the significance of the lion and the harp in the imperial coat of arms; the Eastern window in Anglican Cathedrals; the Old Testament character of many English customs and laws, and Britain's dominion over greater Palestine, including the Euphrates Valley, the Sudan, and Eastern Africa. I recall that the Russians also have a propaganda which they call Scythianism, and I am not sure that the Saxons of Perna may not some day claim to be at least a by-product of this chosen-race theory. In any case, when homoeopathically applied, this is a doctrine that may further British interests, and no one has taken the trouble as yet to refute it.

How can I describe the noisy markets on Saturday evening, the gray and storm-weathered churches with telegram-like invitations to enter placarded on the railing in front, the gaping crowd at the entrance of a side street watching an acrobat or a sleight-of-hand man, the shabby doors with Hebrew signs above them, the gloomy dock district with its thin, drabbled processions of Syndicalists and Salvation Army people, the dark courts and areas teeming with collarless Apaches and shrill-voiced women with blue-bruised faces?

But that is only one aspect of this great city of seven millions. Its masses are made up of a lower-middle class of shop and office employees, petty

tradesmen, and well-paid artisans. Churches, chapels, and bars stand on every corner, and jointly distill the public opinion of a city that rules a large part of the globe.

In the train that left Victoria Station Sunday morning was a group of sleepy gentlemen carrying great, shapeless objects in sumptuous coverings. They were members of a jazz band who had played at some night resort until 2 a. m., and were now leaving for the Continent. Later I saw them grouped around a gigantic gramophone in a corner of the Channel steamer picking up the latest airs from America.

I discovered in the *Times* that morning an article by Mr. Amery, former First Lord of the Admiralty, arguing that the safety factor in the English fleet was already so dangerously low that it was impossible to consider increasing its duties by making it a policeman for the League. He almost suggested the astonishing idea that if this new obligation were to be assumed England must increase her armaments.

At the Democratic Peace Conference I became acquainted with a Slavic author who delivered a temperamental address pleading for the independence of national minorities. He later told me frankly that he came to London in order to see with his own eyes what the actual influence of the apparently thriving bourgeois peace-movement was, because the intolerable situation of the national minorities in certain Eastern countries was driving them rapidly into the arms of Moscow. He was not sure that our enterprise would be in time to forestall such a development.

On board the Channel steamer I made the acquaintance of a Negro, a physician educated in Europe, who had been visiting Wembley. He looked forward confidently to the ultimate com-

plete liberation of Africa from all white control, and declared that the black armies of France, bad as they are for the moment, would become an important factor in the future uprising. He also mentioned Mahatma Gandhi, observing that the whole world recognized his lofty ideals and conduct, but that the Indian movement would have to conquer its scruples before it could succeed.

My conversation with this man recalled a meeting with another gentleman in London, who declared himself an ardent advocate of the Egyptian Nationalist movement, and expressed the opinion that the latest frontier-dispute between Egypt and Italy was being fomented by English interests. He added: 'We want independence, absolute independence, and we shall have it.'

In my trunk I have a colored print of the great crucifix on the summit of the Andes between Argentina and Chile, cast from the bronze of melted cannon, and set up as a symbol of eternal peace between the two countries who erected it twenty years ago. An aristocratic old lady in Chelsea, who invited a number of Frenchmen and Germans to her house, hit upon the idea of presenting each of her guests with a copy of this picture and expressing the hope that sometime a similar monument might stand on the Rhine.

All in all, the Congress was worth while. It taught us that the question of world peace is not yet thoroughly understood.

Much time and labor must be spent before a monument of goodwill and sincere neighborliness will rise in the open reaches of the Rhine Valley, like the one upon the snowy peaks of the remote Andes. But what visions, what hopes, that magic thought suggests!

## II. AS SEEN BY A RUSSIAN COMMUNIST

BY MIKHAIL KOLTSOV

From *Pravda*, October 31  
(MOSCOW COMMUNIST-PARTY OFFICIAL DAILY)

ON Thursday the King's speech from the throne was read in the House of Commons. The speech noted with equal approval two accomplishments of the MacDonald Government: the Dawes Plan and the Anglo-Soviet agreement. After the session gray-haired attendants, with respectable whiskers, carefully covered the speaker's desk and the rest of the constitutional paraphernalia with dust-covers — for three weeks. Liberals and Conservatives walked off, arm in arm, to attend a coalition gathering, and the Premier went to a Labor Party meeting.

The Honorable Mr. Clynes thought it his duty to draw the attention of the Labor meeting to His Majesty's courteous words of commendation. His remarks were greeted by enthusiastic applause and approving shouts: 'For the King is a jolly good fellow!'

Two days previously the Communists had been expelled from the Labor Party. They were flung overboard as revolutionary disturbers. There was nothing surprising in that. Only one of two things is possible: either the King is a jolly good fellow, or the Communists are jolly good fellows. And, so far as meekness and a loving heart go, Communists are a poor second in such a competition.

However, it is not easy to crush our Party. The very next day after their expulsion by MacDonald, the members of the little compact Communist Party of Great Britain quietly intensi-

fied their work as though nothing had happened. To get closer to the working masses — whether inside the Labor Party or outside it — was the aim. And the Party went full steam ahead.

In a small room with colored curtains the twilight of a London autumn day mingles with the dim light of a gas jet. A few men sit around a table — members of the Political Bureau whose headquarters this is. They are comparatively young men, but they are old party-workers with much experience behind them.

Tall, taciturn Inkpin is the Party's secretary. Like the other members of the Bureau he is a pure-blood proletarian. He has worked for Communism for over twenty years. This book-binder seldom appears on the speaker's platform, but his stooping figure is ceaselessly bent over his desk and his whole appearance, with the long shadow of his pipe upon the wall, is the very symbol of British Communism's organized unity and tireless, machinelike activity.

It would be hard to recognize a boiler-maker in the slim, correct Pollitt, a proletarian working at one of the hardest manual trades. He is among our best party agitators and organizers. He has been active in trade-union work and led the campaign for factory committees. He is also an excellent chairman of meetings, quiet and adroit.

Gallacher, the miner, is probably

the oldest member of the Bureau. Like his close associate Campbell, he is a great agitator. He has recently begun organizing the Party's work in the colonies — a branch of activity that is only now coming into its own.

John Campbell did not need the sensational abandonment of his prosecution by the Government a few days ago, which made him known throughout all England, to increase his popularity with Labor. He is a metal worker with fifteen years' revolutionary activity behind him, editor of the *Worker's Weekly*, and highly valued by his Party for his clear, Marxian thinking and his practical wisdom. In most difficult crises of the Party's life, Campbell has invariably chosen the wisest and most farsighted line of conduct.

Familiar Soviet portraits hang on the wall. Two men can be seen strolling up and down the sidewalk before the windows. But they are merely hired detectives, and after 6 p.m. nobody watches the building occupied by the Central Committee of the British Communist Party. Detectives too have the right to their eight-hour day; they are workers like others, and — who knows? — perhaps they are members of MacDonald's Labor Party!

A plenary session of the Committee and of active Party members is taking place in the small public-library hall of a workingmen's suburb. The building belongs to the municipality, but the men who manage it, down to the last watchman, are Communists; and this makes it a convenient working-centre.

The purpose of to-day's meeting is to define the Communist Party's attitude toward the Labor Party. Campbell reads a report. During the debate — or, more exactly, exchange of opinions, for to-day all are practically unanimous — the wavering, inconsistent policy of the Labor Party toward the

Communists stands unsparingly exposed. Several local Labor organizations do not approve the expelling of the Communists. Others endorsed that action in theory, but oppose it in practice. The experience of Saklatvala, a Hindu Communist, who tells how on the previous day he was invited to speak at a local campaign meeting by the Labor Party election committee, is greeted with great laughter.

'But you expelled me yesterday, did you not?' he asked.

The committeemen looked embarrassed, but protested: —

'For God's sake, come. We've got to have you. We'll see what happens later. Why should we throw you out?'

The laughter is repeated when another speaker announces that a second Communist has just been elected mayor of the municipality in which the present meeting is taking place.

The hall grows more crowded. A plenary session to which Party members are invited is a novelty, and it is especially appreciated in this particular district, where workers have become disgusted with the stand-offishness of the regular Labor Party committeemen.

The London Communist Conference meets in a small theatre on Charlotte Street. Few faces but those of working people are visible in the audience. Comrades tell me that the 'laborization' of the British Communist Party progresses by leaps and bounds. The recent difficulties, inasmuch as they have demonstrated the Party's class character, will doubtless help to rid it of a few hundred intellectuals and to bring to its ranks a few thousand more workers. The list of new members, read aloud at the Conference, confirms this expectation. The speakers produce the same impression. Whenever one of them expresses views markedly dif-

ferent from those of the majority, he is invariably an intellectual. A typical case is a middle-aged and very temperamental doctor who tries violently to convince the audience that the Labor Party is the only proletarian party in England and that the Communists ought to make any sacrifice asked in order to work with it.

By noon the debate has grown even more heated, but gradually the crowd thins out; for, as befits true Englishmen, no one forgets his luncheon. In the afternoon, the whole Party — its Political Bureau, the League of Communist Youth, and the Communist Boy Scouts — is to take part in an open-air demonstration.

Trafalgar Square — a gigantic granite clearing hewn out of a jungle of many-storied buildings in the historical and political heart of London, a square without a single blade of grass or a green leaf, a mighty, expressive poem in stone written by English imperialism! Its fountains, with their jets plunging heavily into gigantic stone basins, the dimensions of the pedestals upon which stand the memorials to Nelson and Gordon, the sphinxlike disdain on the faces of the bronze lions twice their natural size, all express hopeless dullness and dull hopelessness. They must have been builders of genius indeed who made this square, for they locked every detail of it into a perfect cycle of immobility: inanimate objects and living beings — the highly formal jet of the fountain, the stubborn curve of the railing, the measured step of the policeman in his black helmet.

Into this vale of finality, hemmed in by ministries and ancient churches, the wise old rulers of the country have allowed a channel of liberalism to flow. As noted in all guidebooks, and as any patriot, proud of his beefsteaks and his constitution, will explain, Trafalgar

Square is set apart as an open forum for all political creeds and platforms. The cautious hypocrisy of constitutionalism here appears in full light. A semblance of free speech is given to hopeless fanatics whose rantings make their hearers smile, while true freedom is ruthlessly suppressed. Is it not for that second object that police details lurk around street corners and sharp-eyed gentlemen with notebooks and tiny detectives' cameras stand watch here and there?

Our demonstration is set for Sunday, at 3 P.M. At ten minutes to three Trafalgar Square is half deserted. A few small groups stand listening to crank speakers, who never run short there, and to whom the Square chiefly owes its reputation as a forum of liberty. Here stands an old man with tufts of white hair straggling from under his battered silk hat. The gentlemen from Scotland Yard can well afford to pass him unnoticed. The old man talks about the coming of Antichrist and sees the only salvation of humanity in joining the 'Universal Christian League,' of which you can become a member by simply buying a ticket from him for threepence. All the strength of the old man's arguments, all his invective and the might of his wrath, are directed against a neighboring group where some strayed sheep listen to the representative of the unholy 'Party of Christian Anarchists.' This Party has one immeasurable advantage over the first — a membership in it costs only a penny, and you get a four-page tract as a premium in addition. The prophet of the Universal Christian League accuses the representative of the 'Anarchists' of receiving secret subsidies from Antichrist himself. The representative of the 'Anarchists,' in his turn, expresses doubt as to the purity of the sources of income of the 'League.' The two old men embark upon a furi-

ous debate over the heads of their hearers, who, untroubled by the fact that the difference between the two organizations remains as cloudy as ever, and satisfied with the fun, leave the two ancients to their mutual recriminations.

At five minutes to three, quite unexpectedly to the inexperienced eye of a Russian observer, the Square suddenly becomes crowded. The cannon-mouth openings of the underground railways pour forth endless streams of people. Trains from industrial districts arrive every three minutes, others every minute. The throng grows visibly denser with each moment that passes, — it already numbers thousands, — and at the foot of Nelson's monument, upon the granite steps between the two bronze lions, preparations have begun to open the meeting punctually at three o'clock.

London's sluggish Sunday traffic grows more animated in the afternoon. Red buses with jangling bells and horns seem to multiply. The public that fills their top seats eyes with cold curiosity the red banners hanging around the Nelson pedestal. Tourists from the National Gallery are haughtily amazed at a spectacle not mentioned in their Baedekers. The gold-and-rainbow liveried doormen of the distinguished hotels strain their eyes to catch glimpses of what is going on. Raising his voice above the din of the largest city in the world, Sam Elsbury, who has united in his own person such unlike trades as those of a miner and a tailor, reads the resolutions which, according to the English custom, precede the speeches. The sea of humanity listens with breathless interest to the Communist theses.

My Russian readers would stare with surprise to see this throng of Communist workers. They are thousands of neatly shaven men in good felt-hats, clean white collars, and carefully tied cravats. But you cannot imagine

an English workman otherwise on his holiday. The participants in to-day's meeting can't imagine men dressing differently; old Tom Mann in his correct black suit and starched collar, waving his hand in greeting to his fellow workers, would be unthinkable here in another attire. You must look closer and see these people's callous, plebeian hands, with their traces of grime that refuse to yield to scouring, to recognize in these *bourzhoi* our own brother proletarians.

Tom Mann, the workers' favorite speaker, has scarcely time to begin his speech, with a raucous purr and catlike tiptoe walking, — in imitation of Lloyd George, the panther, — when a pleasant surprise interrupts the meeting. From around a corner a procession emerges with shrill martial music and a merry tumult that prevent the people already present from seeing exactly what is coming. Then the human mass opens a passage, allowing the procession to pass. Surrounded by a cordon of policemen, a column of the proletarians of the Poplar district moves toward the centre of the Square. First comes a big banner with allegorical pictures, then a band led by a huge young fellow in a smart derby-hat and bared neck. Instead of a leader's baton he carries a six-foot staff with ribbons and a gilded knob, which he manipulates most adroitly to everybody's delight. Nevertheless the fascinated spectators profess anxiety as to the fate of the leader's head and derby. The band consists of flutes, clarinets, and a drum.

This column is of imposing size. Sunshine, a London rarity, encourages many newcomers to join the crowd. Poplar tailors — possessors of large families, like their colleagues in other countries — appear in full strength: one baby is carried by the father, one by the mother, three cling to their

parents' trousers and skirts, and one is constantly getting lost in the throng. Huge navvies tower high above them and smoke their pipes with an air of independence. Beside these giants the watchmakers seem Lilliputians at the feet of Gulliver. Gradually the new arrivals are absorbed by the throng, and the energetic band-leader himself becomes an eager listener.

It is no longer possible to move. Only the young Communist Scouts, little boys and girls with stacks of literature in their arms, squeeze between people's legs and sell the latest number of the *Young Comrade*. It becomes difficult to hear, and at a sign from the chairman several thousand people divert their attention to the right, where a second speaker addresses an overflow meeting.

What slogans and subjects are nearest to the heart of an English Labor audience? The speakers touch upon every burning question of the day. The ominous Dawes Plan is set forth in broad and merciless daylight; the elections and the Labor Party are discussed; and to all this the workers respond quickly and unanimously. Every mention of the Soviet Republic — the Anglo-Soviet Treaty, and closer relations with the Soviets — arouses veritable enthusiasm. There is a sharp and sinister roar whenever the White Terror is mentioned, or the persecutions of Communists in Germany, Poland, and Ireland. Then it is that these people take their pipes out of their mouths to give full vent to their feelings; and at such moments our workman from Sormovo or Putilovskii would instantly recognize his brethren in spite of their white collars and soft hats.

Tom Mann and his companion speaker end their addresses at the same moment. Old Tom makes a sign and cautiously covers his head. The precaution is a needed one. A downpour of

copper and silver coins inundates the platforms — and this is a demonstration in itself, because collections are forbidden in Trafalgar Square. The presiding officers have to vacate the platforms temporarily to escape the bombardment. The hail of coins continues for several minutes, then suitcases are brought and the money packed in them. Not 'the ubiquitous gold of the Moscow International,' but the copper coins of English workers, keep the British Communist Party going. 'What childish folly to build up a revolution on pennies!' you say. Yes — it would be folly if revolutions were made for money.

The audience demands: 'Campbell! Campbell! Harry Pollitt!'

They appear and address a crowd simultaneously from two platforms. The throng rejoices in Campbell, the little Scotchman, its favorite — the Communist editor made famous by the fall of MacDonald's Cabinet. But he cannily refrains from making a sensation. In vain do the reporters hold their notebooks in readiness. In the 'Campbell case,' he says, his part was only that of a common party-agitator. Then he scathingly denounces the Dawes Plan, that soft, slippery noose for the German worker's neck.

Twilight thickens into darkness and the dense thousands crowd nearer to the platforms. Right by their side the magnificent Sunday-night illumination of the rich city begins to glare, and her thousand seductions gleam through her enchanted mist. This buzzing Vanity Fair, this sea of hurried movement, is organized to a degree that makes it seem elemental. In the dark sky, letters of fire appear out of nowhere, as if at the sign of a divinity. The divine language, however, is plain and concise. Thus Omniscience shines from the scrolls of the firmament above London: —

'Have you read the amazing "Analysis of Love" by Marie Corelli in to-day's *Daily Express*?'

'The Prince of Wales has arrived in Detroit and will have supper with Mr. Ford.'

'The experiments of the Minister of Air Defense with new bombing-planes are a brilliant success.'

But the slender figure of Harry Pollitt sways and gesticulates in semidarkness above the human sea as he thunders: 'We shall not permit a new war! The workers of the world will rise in protest against strangling Germany's workers!'

But the tables in the sky are undisturbed in their revelations:—

'This morning Chaliapin left for New York, where he will receive eight hundred pounds for one evening's singing. He says that London tailors are the best in the world.'

'Liberals and Conservatives have united in many election districts.'

Campbell has finished speaking. The Square looks like a dark sea slightly ruffled by a breeze. But presently the 'International' sounds.

The English sing our anthem differently from the way it is sung in Moscow. When it peals out from the Red Army regiments, accompanied by a thunder of drums, it has a Russian swing and it is full of the victorious pride of a class that knows what victory has cost them; it voices the sovereign dignity of workers and peasants who have held the Tsar's empire in the hollow of their hand for seven years. The words 'This will be our last and decisive fight' are, with us, paraphrased into 'This is our last'; and do we not even often shout exultantly, 'This was our last and decisive fight'? Here in England the 'International' is sullen and curt. It suggests the dogged marching-song of infantry moving into battle; it breathes both anxiety and faith. Faith — here, in this granite pit in the heart of the world's greatest bourgeois stronghold! Where are the mighty battering rams that will hurl this stronghold crumbling to the ground? It is not time for battering rams yet. But drills, tireless drills of the working class and the Communist Party of England — these are the task of to-day.

## A CHRISTMAS WALK IN DICKENS LAND

BY ANNA LENAH ELGSTRÖM

From *Julkvällen*, 1924  
(SWEDISH CHRISTMAS ANNUAL)

'EVERY barn in the neighborhood, every stone in the church, and every foot of the churchyard, had some association of its own, in my mind, connected with these books.' It is Dickens himself who speaks thus of the 'glorious host' who kept his imagination alive during his own lonely and gloomy childhood.

But how well do not these words apply to the magic charm his own books have thrown over London?

No one — at least no lover of Dickens — can, from the bottom of Fleet Street, observe how St. Paul's silvery-gray cupola rolls like a gigantic ball over the edge of Ludgate Hill without having his own imagination filled with

visions of giants playing at tenpins, Lord Mayors' processions parading through labyrinthine streets as narrow as gutters, sooty old churches with tolling bells, and gay taverns hidden in crooked lanes.

The great magician has touched with his wand everything in the shadow of St. Paul's Cathedral. Once inside the invisible threshold to Temple Bar, you wander about, like a child in a fairy forest, among a multitude of Dickens figures,—also a 'glorious host,'—more alive and real than the people who jostle you. Mr. Pickwick himself comes down the street on his way to the George and Vulture Tavern in High Street, Borough—the only tavern now left in London with a yard surrounded by a gallery, which inevitably recalls the figure of Sam Weller brushing Mr. Jingle's boots. There one encounters Mr. Stryver from *A Tale of Two Cities*, 'shouldering his way from the Temple, while the bloom of the Long Vacation's infancy was still upon it. Anybody who had seen him projecting himself into Soho while he was yet on Saint Dunstan's side of Temple Bar, bursting in his full-blown way along the pavement, to the jostlement of all weaker people, might have seen how safe and strong he was.'

And here come Sidney Carton and Charles Darnay, arm in arm, on their way to the Cheshire Cheese in Fleet Street, where a tablet on the wall in one of the old-fashioned dining-rooms soberly relates that in a particular stall these two imaginary characters had their dinner the same day that Mr. Carton, through his eloquence, had saved his rival!

What writer, except Shakespeare, has more sovereignly than Dickens forced his figures into the circle of the living?

But the more real an author's

characters become, the more imaginary and legendary he becomes himself.

Why otherwise should I have been so startled when a kind friend asked me whether I should like to meet Dickens's youngest son, Sir Henry Fielding Dickens, King's Counsel and Criminal Judge in the Old Bailey? Had she said Homer's son, or even Mr. Pickwick's, I should not have been more surprised.

The Old Bailey itself is, of course, one of the most Dickensian places in London. Each time I pass between what were once the walls of Newgate I hear the bell of St. Sepulchre ring on Fagin's last night on this earth, and I see other weird figures pass out of the debtors' door.

It seemed like another Dickens story to find, inside, the youngest son of their creator—a little gray old man, stiff and elegant in the white wig of an English judge, exercising his functions with a humane and humorous leniency which well befitting the son of his father. The story became a fairy tale when the only survivor of the family related for me what he alone could tell—how his great father walked and stood, what he ate and drank, and what he joked about in his own domestic circle.

Little wonder that a Dickens-lover like myself later strolled as in a trance through the streets where his son had told me his father used to walk while composing the next chapter of the book he had in hand.

'But though we children had to keep absolutely quiet on that account, we regarded it a great privilege to be allowed to accompany him, because wherever he went during the heyday of his fame he received royal homage, and people followed him long distances to see and greet him.'

In my imagination I could see the stately figure, in a garb that was

picturesque even for that period, as with the seven-league boots his friend Sala speaks of he marched down the Strand. It was the homeward path of his childhood he took—the path about which he once wrote that it made him cry long after his first child could walk and talk: 'In my dreams I have often followed that path since.'

Across Blackfriars Bridge he used to trudge—a small, slender boy, 'in a much-worn little white hat . . . , a black jacket, and a pair of hard, stiff corduroy trousers'—from Warren's shoe-polish factory, where he worked, to his 'home'—the Marshalsea Prison, where his father was imprisoned for debt.

I walked past the house at Southwark Bridge where he once took refuge when one of his fellow employees at the factory, friendly Bob Fagin, wanted to accompany him home. 'I was too proud to let him know about the prison; and after making several efforts to get rid of him, to all of which Bob Fagin in his goodness was deaf, shook hands with him on the steps of a house near Southwark Bridge on the Surrey side, making believe that I lived there. As a finishing piece of reality in case of his looking back, I knocked at the door and asked the woman who opened it if that was Mr. Robert Fagin's house.'

A little farther down are Marshalsea Road, and St. George's Church, in which Little Dorrit was married, where there is a wall-tablet marking the location of the Marshalsea Prison—which the little Charles was so disinclined to acknowledge as his place of residence.

I follow Charles Dickens and his twin brother, David Copperfield, on their marvelous childhood adventures—to the Red Lion Tavern in Derby Street, where they once celebrated their birthday with a glass of 'Genu-

ine Stunning ale'; or to the shop on the Strand where they got 'a stout pale pudding, heavy and flabby, and with great flat raisins in it, stuck in whole at wide distances apart,' which Charles nevertheless regarded as a great treat and to which he used to 'blow' himself when he was 'flush.'

Now we are back on the Strand; no one can follow Dickens without often returning to this neighborhood which he so loved that, as his biographer John Forster writes, 'nothing gave him greater joy than to be taken on a stroll between the Strand and Covent Garden.'

He passed this place as a twenty-two-year-old reporter on his daily round to the office of the *Morning Chronicle*. From here he turned his steps into Fleet Street on the momentous day that his first contribution was printed in a newspaper. After having bought a copy of the paper in question, he took a walk—his eyes dim with proud tears—around Westminster Abbey. It was a coincidence, of course; hardly could he have had a premonition that some day his own coffin would be placed inside that famous burial site, and that his countrymen would file past his tomb for weeks to place flowers on the dust of their most truly English novelist.

'Yes, they sometimes do it even now—after fifty-four years,' remarked Sir Henry with pardonable pride.

I return in memory to the young writer and the kingdom he had yet to win, the newspaper and bookshop quarters about St. Paul's. Only a few years later, with fame already assured, he walked to and from the office of *Household Words*, in Wellington Street, as the beloved 'Uncommercial Traveler' of the Londoners.

In the rôle of this cheerful or indignant 'Traveler in Human Interests' he explored his London in all direc-

tions. The shoe-polish days had not been spent in vain. He knew all his city's obscurerest corners, stories, and traditions, and owned it as only the street urchin can. 'No gypsy on earth is a greater vagabond than myself,' he wrote in describing this period of his life; 'it is so natural to me and strong with me, that I think I must be the descendant, at no great distance, of some irreclaimable tramp.'

Fashionable London interested him no more than it would an actual tramp. He seldom visited it except, like Mr. Clennam in *Little Dorrit*, to pay ironical visits at Mr. Tite Barnacle's famous Circumlocution Office.

His son the lawyer suggested with a smile that his father seemed to have been more attracted by the 'Legal Land' — the lawyers' silent labyrinths of Halls, Inns, and Chambers, between the Thames to the south and High Holborn to the north. Dickens's interest in everything that concerned the law was obvious. Consequently I at once asked Sir Henry whether his father had influenced him in his choice of a profession. But the Judge was only twenty-two years old when his father died, and had barely taken his degree at Oxford — to his father's delight, a high one. As a practising lawyer he later had his chambers in the Inner Temple, where his own son, in his turn, now resides. I think Dickens would have approved the choice, for he had kinder words for the Inner and Middle Temples than for any other 'legal nooks.'

There, in the winding passages of old, gray, stone-paved courtyards about the Crusaders' ancient round church the silence truly is, as he said, as deep as though the visitor had suddenly put cotton in his ears and felt slippers on his feet. One may walk from one passage to the other,

arranged in nests like Chinese boxes, containing an ever deeper and dreamier stillness.

Then one suddenly hears the sound of plashing water, and the next moment, as by magic, he enters an open shaded court with a view over green meadows all the way down to the shimmering surface of the Thames.

It is Fountain Court, which played such a matchmaking rôle in *Martin Chuzzlewit*: 'Brilliantly the Temple Fountain sparkled in the sun, and laughingly its liquid music played, and merrily the idle drops of water danced and danced, and peeping out in sport among the trees, plunged lightly down to hide themselves, as little Ruth and her companion came towards it.'

Directly opposite the exit from Middle Temple into Fleet Street, Chancery Lane makes its way into the northern part of Legal Land — Chancery Lane, which, as Mr. Guppy said, looked like its own name. To the right from Fleet Street, Cursitor Street swings up to Took's Court, — 'the shady Cook's Court,' Dickens calls it, — where Mr. Snagsby carried on his trade as a law stationer. The shadow is just as deep now as it was then. One's steps reëcho in the little well-like yard, surrounded by high, dirty buildings with iron gratings like those in which Mrs. Jellyby's children used to get caught. On a dirty brown door is inscribed the melancholy legend, 'The Poor Travellers' Inn.' Poor travelers, they must have been dead a long time! Everything in Took's Court breathes the dusty, gloomy, weird atmosphere which Dickens has caught so well in his stories about haunted houses.

Halfway along Chancery Lane one reaches the Lincoln's Inn Gateway, at which Mr. Guppy put down Esther Summerson in *Bleak House*. I have

friends in Lincoln's Inn, and have therefore experienced many times her sensation of suddenly plunging from the noisy street into the stillness under the arches around the hidden cemetery. Dickens himself must have felt it very often, for during the short period that he planned to be an attorney he was employed by a Mr. Molloy at 8 New Square, immediately around the corner from the chapel.

From Lincoln's Inn I do not visit the old oak-timbered house in Portsmouth Street, near by, which is popularly supposed to have been the Old Curiosity Shop. Sir Henry has informed me that this is not the case.

Instead, I follow the narrow channel of Little Turnstile, which winds along with such sharp turns that I believe Mr. Snagsby's information to his apprentices that 'a brook "as clear as crystal" once ran right down the middle of Holborn, when Turnstile really was a turnstile, leading slap away into the meadows.' And thus I arrive at High Holborn's long lines of picturesque old houses, and then pass through a gateway in one of them into Staple Inn. It is another basin of dreamy silences and gray flagstones. But suddenly bright flowers, just as startlingly unreal as the fountain in the Inner Temple, begin to appear in the dusk of the furthermost court-yard. There — and in the same house where the Anglo-Swedish Society now has its office — one finds the mysterious letters, 'J. P. T. 1747,' over which Dickens has caused so many people to rack their brains ever since *Edwin Drood's* Mr. Grewgious sat there and stared at them.

When Sir Henry mentioned Edwin Drood I saw my chance to ask a question about this uncompleted masterpiece: Had Charles Dickens ever confided to any of his relatives how he intended the book should end?

'No,' was his reply; 'he never discussed his work with his family. We only knew it was some subject from East End that occupied him, because he went out there so often. He even visited Shadwell's opium dives to get material for that book.'

Limehouse, moreover, had few secrets for Dickens — one needs only to read the Uncommercial Traveler's masterly description of Mercantile Jack's den to understand that. With the exception of the West End, Dickens's London is, therefore, all of London.

'Something in the City' had, for instance, as much appeal for him as Legal Land or the Thames District with its boats and wharves and 'waterside characters.' Each morning with an expression of newborn hope, Herbert Pocket in *Great Expectations* went to the City, but always returned disappointed from this queer place where, according to another authority, Bob Sawyer of the Pickwick stories, more people have been disappointed than in any other place on earth.

I therefore turn my back on this sad neighborhood and choose the happier sight of the stately façade of the Mansion House, because here, with the Guildhall and its giants in the background, Dickens's festive witchery is at its best — his full-blooded, almost mediæval, joy in the good things of life.

With the sound of the *Christmas Carol's* words ringing in my ears — 'The Lord Mayor, in the stronghold of the mighty Mansion House, gave orders to his fifty cooks and butlers to keep Christmas as a Lord Mayor's household should' — I had such visions of banquets for giants, sights of Gog and Magog, drinking wine from barrels and, like Nature, 'brewing on a large scale,' to quote another simile from the same story about a London

fog, that I saw St. Dunstan's spire rise against a bright Christmas-card sky, and how Toby Veck had to run back and forth on the snow-covered sidewalk opposite in order to keep warm while he conversed with the too-knowing church bells.

I was once more in Christmas-land, that witching realm where one's childhood festivals still exhale a highly spiced aroma of spruce, sealing wax, carols, rich food, and sparkling Christmas candles.

And with that country Dickens has a great deal to do. As a child I always read him at Christmas — (I know that many others do the same): first of all, his Christmas stories, the best of the kind ever written — not even Santa Claus could have invented anything better; and also the others.

The Christmas Country's spicy contrasts — the glow of open fires, doubly bright against the wintry darkness outside, and a happy humanity, bravely challenging its dangers — the same mood is always found in Dickens at his best. It is the atmosphere one inhales, for instance, at the immortal Christmas celebration of the Pickwick Club with all those cheerful people listening with agreeable shivers to the clergyman's ghost-stories. Even when Dickens is at his darkest one has no greater sense of horror. One feels that he, like all experienced people, knows that life never becomes so cruel as we imagine. One knows that he, with the warm humanity of such a person, will not give up until he has got his good and tested characters gathered around the fireside again, has put glasses and plates in their hands, eager as a housewife, or as

Santa Claus himself, to provide them with the material comfort which he, in his love's wisdom, knows to be so necessary for the tired children of men.

Dickens 'in a nutshell' seems to me to be found in John Forster's stories about his traditional Christmas Eve stroll through the market bustle between Long Acre and Aldgate, as well as in his walks the next day in such Micawberesque, shabbily genteel districts as Kentish Town or Somers' Town. There he used to wander for hours, rejoicing at the Christmas-dinner preparations that he caught glimpses of behind the curtains of the middle-class homes.

The limits of his Christmas walks were also the limits of his sympathies — always all-inclusive, but yet warmest for the small, modest existences. The memory of his own childhood among them made him not only a conscientious, tender father, anxious to provide his own children with everything he himself had lacked, — that his son speaks of, — but it also gave his interest in the welfare of the poor and oppressed the wholly personal, the hotly impassioned, tone that it reveals. This was also the reason he felt more at home in such picturesque districts as Covent Garden, with its cabbage smells and theatrical air, than in Hyde Park.

Yet we remember the latter more easily than the former. We regard Dickens as a lover of comfort and good cheer, as a safe, optimistic storyteller for the middle classes. But we forget that even Mr. Pickwick, besides being a *bon vivant*, was, like his creator, a knight errant, constantly seeking innocence to safeguard and wrongs to right.

## THE RETURN TO GOLD

From the *Statist*, November 15

(LONDON FINANCIAL WEEKLY)

THE recent advance in the American exchange, following on the fairly general stoppage of inflation in European currencies during the current year, brings the question of an international gold standard nearer than it has been at any time since the Armistice. All the signs indicate that a sweeping decision on this important question will have to be made in the new year. How close the gold standard is at the moment will be apparent from a glance at the following table, showing the divergence from the gold parities of some of the leading currencies, according to the exchange rates current in New York on Wednesday, November 12.

	Monetary Unit	Par	Mean Cable Rate	Dollar's % of Parity
Stockholm	Krone	\$0.268	\$0.2682	99.3
Montreal	Dollar	1.00	1.00	100.0
Berne	Franc	.193	.1926	100.2
Amsterdam	Florin	.402	.3995	100.7
Australia	Pound	4.8667	4.774	102.0
S. Africa	Pound	4.8667	4.774	102.0
New Zealand	Pound	4.8667	4.672	103.7
London	Pound	4.8667	4.6125	105.4
Yokohama	Yen	.4984	.386	129.1
Madrid	Peseta	.193	.1355	142.4
Copenhagen	Krone	.268	.176	152.3
Christiania	Krone	.268	.1474	181.8
Paris	Franc	.193	.0527	366.3
Brussels	Franc	.193	.0484	398.8
Rome	Lira	.193	.0434	444.7

The exchanges are placed in order of proximity to the gold standard. The first on the list is Sweden, which has already readopted the gold standard. It will be seen that the United States dollar is at a fractional discount in Stockholm. In the same category may be placed the silver exchanges, including British India. Next on the list is the Canadian dollar, which is now at parity with gold. As regards the other Dominions, the gold dollar shows a premium of only 2 per cent as against the Australian and South African curren-

cies, and a premium of 3.7 per cent as against the New Zealand pound. The Australian and South African pounds are, in fact, nearer to gold than to sterling. Before the Dominion currencies, come the Swiss franc and the Dutch florin, which are each at only a very small discount in relation to gold. Then follows London, the most important of all in this connection; the last quotation for sterling in New York, which was \$4.61 $\frac{1}{4}$  as against the parity of \$4.86 $\frac{2}{3}$ , showed a premium of only 5.4 per cent for the gold dollar in relation to sterling.

This premium of 5.4 per cent does not, of course, mark the nearest point that sterling has gained, in relation to the gold parity, since the breakaway from the 'pegged' rate in March 1919. A still narrower margin was registered in February of last year, when, at a rate of \$4.72 $\frac{1}{16}$ , the American dollar was at a premium of only 3 per cent in relation to sterling. Yet the present circumstances are fundamentally different from those obtaining on that occasion. Since then immense strides have been made in rehabilitation of European currencies, as well as in restoration of political quiescence on the Continent. Budget deficits have been almost universally brought under control, and inflation has been stopped. Moreover, an important group of countries has been brought definitely back to a gold basis, including those like Canada and Sweden, where the old parities have already been restored, and others like Poland with the gold zloty, Russia with the gold chervonetz, Latvia with the gold lat, and Germany with the new gold Reichsmark, — to mention only

some outstanding examples, — where new gold currencies have been introduced on the basis of devaluation of the depreciated paper currencies.

At present, indeed, it may be said that the world is waiting on London for a general reversion to the international gold standard. Before sterling is at parity with gold we may reasonably expect to see an important group of currencies — those placed above 'London' in the foregoing table — already at the parity. It is unlikely, however, that all these countries would restore a free gold market until the premier financial centre of the world had taken the initiative. Again, those countries like France, Belgium, and Italy, which will eventually be compelled to accept devaluation of their currencies, would have to consider such a step at once if London returned to gold, though they may be expected to keep postponing a decision on this head while the pound remains at a discount in New York.

The present approach to the international gold standard is due, not to an improvement in the intrinsic value of European currencies generally, but to a fall of some 10 per cent in the value of

gold itself, as expressed by rising prices in America. This is all to the good in so far as it avoids the pitfall of deflation, and also as it has a stimulating effect on world trade. How far the movement will continue it is not possible to forecast, but it is more than likely that the present decline in gold will be carried to further lengths.

As has invariably happened in recent years, the present fall in gold has induced a corresponding decline in the internal values of the paper currencies during recent months. So far the fall in the dollar has been greater, with the result that currencies abroad generally have gained in the New York Exchange. While it cannot be assumed that this movement will continue in coming months until sterling, for instance, is at parity with New York, yet there is a reasonable prospect of the present margin of 5.4 per cent being reduced still further. In any event, the whole question is emphatically not one for hasty decision or isolated action; a conference of the central banks of Europe, or some other assembly of the same character, would obviously be most competent to handle the momentous problem now being raised.

## SOPORIFIC GOVERNMENTS

BY LUIS ARAQUISTAIN

From *El Sol*, November 10  
(MADRID LIBERAL DAILY)

COOLIDGE as President of the North American Republic, and Baldwin as Prime Minister of England, typify perfectly an age and a type of society that distrust great men. No one questions that the mental calibre of statesmen has diminished in every country during the last half-century. Possibly many high officials to-day are better trained for their specific duties than were those of yesterday, and to that extent they are better administrators in the professional or technical sense. On the other hand, however, they lack the emotional and intellectual elevation that gave to some men of an earlier period the character of heroes or prophets. In our time any competent business man can run a government.

I do not know if this growing depersonalization of public men is due to democracy. Possibly it is. If so, that is not because democracy cannot see the difference between men of personality and men of no personality. It sees that difference very clearly — and fears it. A democracy instinctively dreads a man of force and originality, lest he plunge the country into unsound adventures and moral crusades of which it will repent later. This fear induced the people of the United States to elect Harding after they had broken Wilson.

For Wilson, in spite of all his limitations and ingenuousness, — no doubt vastly exaggerated by detracting Sancho Panzas in both America and Europe, — was one of the last great political idealists. He personally led

his country into the European war, guided by the same spirit of justice that later impelled him to create the League of Nations. But when his people recovered their pragmatic mental balance, for a moment upset by Wilson's prophetic fervor, they silently resolved that many a year should pass before they ever again raised to the chief magistracy of their country a person of preëminent qualities. They elected Harding as a perfect example of impersonality. But the impersonality of Coolidge, of which the country has convinced itself thoroughly during his term as provisional Chief Magistrate, is more than perfect. It is *plusquamperfect*. And so the North American democracy can sleep in peace for the next four years.

Baldwin likewise is the most impersonal individual in the most impersonal of all political organizations — the British Conservative Party. England likewise shows evidence of a remarkable falling off in the philosophical ability, if I may use the word, of her political leaders. I do not mean 'philosophical' in the narrow scholastic sense, but the faculty of seeing events under the aspect of eternity. Probably there has never been another period in British history when there were so few thinkers in public life as to-day. We may except the Labor Party, which includes the Fabian Society and other organizations that have among their members some of the most original minds that England has produced during the last thirty or forty years.

With the death of Lord Morley a few months ago the Liberal Party lost its last and most distinguished modern humanist. Lloyd George, the incomparable political guerrilla, gifted with an infallible art of playing upon the emotions of the populace in great crises, is a man of mediocre mental calibre. Asquith excels him in culture, but has a colorless, uninspiring personality, quite incapable of kindling the fire of enthusiasm in others. Not long ago, to be sure, the *New Statesman* called him the most imposing political figure in Great Britain. But Gulliver was a giant among the Lilliputians.

But the real party of Lilliputians is the Conservatives. The general law that the mediocre shall be selected to preside over the destinies of modern States has its most perfect application in the English Tories, on account of the peculiar psychology of the men who form that party. The Conservatives try to keep things precisely as they are, not only because that is instinctive with them, but also so as to avoid the intellectual and creative effort that all change demands of us. Reforms require thought, critical study, and imagination — forms of mental activity in which the English do not willingly indulge. Any Conservative Party will always have a tremendous following among them, and will include not only those who own property and are afraid of losing it, but also those who do not possess a penny, but prefer poverty without mental effort to the labor of thinking out ways to better their condition. Conservatism in Great Britain means, positively, holding on to what one has, and negatively, shunning the intellectuals and all their works.

Such is the party of impersonalities to which the English nation has entrusted its repose and its slumber for the next few years. The Labor Party does not possess at present any men of

exceptional distinction. The same is true of the other Socialist Parties throughout the world. One by one the representative men of larger mould who survived from an earlier epoch have been taken from us. Juárez was perhaps the last of the great romantic figures — yes, classical figures — of intellectual Socialism. The Labor apostles, the Bebels, the Keir Hardies, have also disappeared. Our Pablo Iglesias is one of the few survivors of that age of Socialism. Therefore, in saying that the British Labor Party possesses no outstanding personalities of first rank, we are merely saying what is true all over the world.

Perchance the times are so unpropitious for such men that it is impossible to have them. Perchance Socialist democracy, like other democracies, distrusts the unpredictable, the ungovernable, element in the truly great. The spirit of democracy limits more and more the freedom of initiative of those whom it chooses for its guides. But if Labor lacks eminent, romantic personalities, it is none the less decidedly romantic as a party, so far as it aims to revolutionize existing political ideals and methods at home and abroad. That is why its programme aroused such lively apprehension among the Conservatives, who normally form a majority of the English nation, and who are a majority not because such a programme immediately threatens them, for it could not be applied at once, but because it challenges them to think — to try to comprehend it.

Consequently the Conservatives have been given the duty of keeping Labor from power for several years, so that a majority of the people will not find themselves under the uncomfortable necessity of fatiguing their brains thinking about reforms. And we may be sure that the Conservatives will measure up to their responsibility. It

is enough to read the names of the new Ministers. Each one, beginning with the Premier himself, might adopt as his personal flower, symbolical of his political creed and his administrative programme, the poppy blossom. Lord Curzon might add, by way of a bit of greenery, a sprig of nettle, which would certainly typify his previous career in the Foreign Office. Happily, they have assigned him a different portfolio in the present Ministry. Of course there are

some men of brains and imagination among the English Conservatives. I need mention but two — Balfour, the polished philosopher; and Robert Cecil, the paladin of the League of Nations. But we do not see their names among the new Ministers. Probably they are not sedative enough. I do not think Mr. Coolidge would select them for his Cabinet if they were Americans. These are years of slumber, not of agitation. Let us sleep.

## THE TORTOISE

BY M. LYSTER

From the *Irish Statesman*, August 30  
(DUBLIN LITERARY AND POLITICAL WEEKLY)

THERE is something depressing about the numerical fact of London. It was an idea that I could not get away from once. Seven million! It haunted me, pursued me. Everyone I spoke to seemed to have lost his individuality, his humanity — he became one in seven million. I myself was no longer a person, for I was also one in seven million. I had become a cipher, a point in space that fitted in with Euclid's definition, 'that which has a position but no magnitude.'

Too many — it is too many. Paris has its five million, Vienna three — ah! and that sky of Vienna overhead, and the clear smell of it in the early morning; or the heat in the leafy streets of Paris, and the rain falling in its gardens and the yellow light coming from its cafés on the wet pavements at night.

I am to tell the story of a tortoise. It is concerned with two places — the London Underground Railway, and a

small French island off the west coast. I was traveling on the Underground Railway, reflecting on the numerical problem. I was passing Camden Town. Euston, Warren Street, Goodge Street, Tottenham Court Road. Looking out as the car rushes through, one can see the horrors of the deep in the gray-ridged spiderlike walls, each side-walls of a nightmare that brings one in the sudden stations gasping back to consciousness. The lift repeats these a little less terribly, but quite beneath there is a round and terrible space that no one sees. It seems to be waiting for dead men to drop into it; it looks as if it were hungry for the bones of the seven million.

But before coming to the lift one sometimes gets a breath of air. It puts one in mind of the wind on the sea or the storm on the distant hills; although it is unreal itself, it is only an imitation. Thus it swept me back — and I thought

at the time it was but a sudden gust of meaningless thought — to an island of western France.

At the back of one of the blatantly white houses on this French island there was a small garden. It was hot and florid, and bursting with extravagance of heliotrope and carnations, about which no one had overburdened themselves with care. These carnations were so rich and voluptuous that they disdained ordinary cold green stalks and had dipped their stalks in a peculiar shade of blue. There were not many green plants growing there, but there were more than is usual in such gardens. There was a good reason why there should be more of them in this garden than another. There was a tortoise in this garden. I had come there to see him.

The owner of the garden told me how he disappeared each winter into the ground and returned again in the spring. He never could be seen coming up — but once, indeed, they did see the miracle of him coming out of the ground with his wise, leathery, wrinkled head. On the day I was there he was not easy to find. But we came on him at last hiding in the greens. He ambled out and along, climbing up banks with amazing ease, the great shell going everywhere with him, so much quicker than one would imagine a tortoise should go, so quick compared to the infinitely slow tortoise of the fairy tales and one's ideas of him in childhood. Oh, he was happy enough in the little garden, climbing the hot brown sides of the mountainous flower-beds as dry and wrinkled as himself, and going down again into the dusty plains that led more easily around the world.

Thus the remembrance of him came back to me in the underground passage, and it proved to be prophetic. I am in no sense clairvoyant, yet truly — I had thought of that garden and the tortoise

in it in the early part of that week, of which I shall presently say more. I had called him vividly to mind, mounting up and descending again, indifferent to my voice that was loud with interest.

Toward the end of that week I was going on the same journey in the Underground. I had heard the conductor say, 'Hurry along the car, please,' and the ring of the bell, and felt the car jolt, when suddenly I beheld the tortoise again — yes, indeed, I stood before him. The train was flying on its desperate journey through Mornington Crescent, and I lingered over the tortoise, where he stood with his gentle feet outstretched on the lap of a lady. How came he to be on such wise familiar terms with Camden Town? I sat on the empty seat beside his owner. Alas, the consideration of the numerical problem returned acutely to me, for in seeing her I saw some of the sorrow that cannot be amended — the sorrow of an old and desolate woman among seven million.

Oh, when I think of the old ladies of London — the old women of London. Among them there are fierce and bitter warriors, ever combative, and there are other old women who are gentle, desolate, and tender. I bow my head, for I am truly before a mystery. Are they not exiles, wanderers who have strayed into London and been lost in its wilderness, where they gaze perplexedly while life grinds on around them? If they could but find the path back, is not their happiness awaiting them in some pleasant Arcady — a garden blossoming each side of a flagged path, goslings and young ducks straying to the pond, bees anxious for the heat and scented flowers, and a great dog lying in the sun? And the young married daughter coming to visit them, bringing the grandchild, and their own grumpy old man settling down with his pipe at the fire or before the door. Oh,

compared with these exiles the old woman who is sitting by her lonely lamp in the bogs of Mayo, she of whom the neighbors say that she is crazy and a changeling, has a blessed lot. For up on the wailing wind from the sea and from the hills comes many a strange light, and a hope is brought, hopes and lights that are above human imagination, and many a will-o'-the-wisp dances in her heart when the night is heavy.

But I cannot show them the way back, and I cannot console them, and I pray that they are vouchsafed visions of the splendor of God, when the night falls and in the breaking of day, to support them — for what else can?

But my friend on the next seat clung to the tortoise.

She wore a vivid-green dress that showed up the rims of her poor red eyes. Her plump and tender fingers lay each side of the shell of her friend. A blue-straw basket lay in her lap, and from out of this leaves and fairy-grasses protruded themselves, the bed of the tortoise.

Presently she spoke to me, making some casual remark, for she had noticed my interest in the animal. Then she began to confide in me. She had been ill, sick to the point of death. She had been nursing her dog, who was a cripple for three weeks. He died. During the night he sometimes made a little suffering noise. She imitated it: 'imm — imm.' Then she would get out of bed to try and comfort him. When he died she fell ill of sorrow. She had nothing but the dog. She recovered from her illness — life took her back to its desolate arms.

Three weeks after the death of her dog she visited his grave — that is, when she was well enough to go. She had to travel a comparatively long way, her dog being buried on the outskirts of a wood. She described to me how she had been hearing all that morning the

little suffering sound the cripple had been making before his death. Just as he had said it in life, 'imm — imm,' almost like the sound of gently falling water, she had heard it. When she was at the grave she heard it again, and though it was now farther away it seemed in some peculiar fashion to be more distinct, more definite.

Leaving the grave, she noticed a man coming out of the wood near by carrying something. He approached her. It was a tortoise. Yes, a good-sized, healthy, and, apparently, affectionate tortoise, for he made signs of friendship as soon as she spoke to his owner. He showed a desire to become hers. At the same time she noticed that she no longer heard the cries of her dog.

The man offered him for sale. He wanted three shillings for him. She bargained for two. She had, so she told the man, very little money with her — (ah, yes, we know that 'with' — lots at home, of course). He let her have the tortoise for two.

'Now, I believe,' she said to me amid the roar of the Underground train, 'that the soul of the dog has been permitted to enter that animal. One does n't expect to be offered a tortoise in a wood.'

I said that it was indeed remarkable, and I reflected on the business capacity and psychological instinct of the man who had sold him, for I had some small friends who purchased tortoises that arrived in crates for fourpence each. I observed to her that I had never seen a tortoise keep out his head so persistently. She turned sharply toward me as I said this: oh, then I knew about tortoises. What should she give him to eat? I mentioned that I had known a French tortoise who was smaller than this one. I described his peregrinations in the mountains and plains of the hot island garden, his going into the earth and returning. I suggested that she

should put her tortoise in a garden and then he would feed himself. But she had no garden — she had only a room. Putting her head down, she added in a low voice that she would turn the room into a garden — yes, the whole room should have earth and plants in boxes round it so that he might have a place to walk. Indeed, she had had a tortoise before, a long, long time ago, when she was a child. He used to be in her father's garden. He knew her, and came when she called him.

But what should she give him to eat, that was the great question. On this I could say no more. My knowledge on tortoises had been exhausted. I suggested her going to the Zoo; they would tell her there. Well, she had been thinking of a bird shop; she was going to enquire there. But the Zoo would be much better; she would certainly go to the Zoo.

'Look,' she said, 'he knows we are talking about him.'

The tortoise's head was still out, and his black unwet eyes were motionless in their leathery surroundings.

'It is certainly remarkable,' she said, 'how he keeps out his head.'

As she said this the tortoise sharply drew in his head for a single instant, and then shot it out again. She lifted him in the air, and one could see his four harmless and easy-going claws aimlessly extended.

'Nothing very grand,' she said, as if she had interpreted the looks of the passengers on the opposite seat, without ever glancing at them, 'but a consolation to a troubled heart.'

She lifted up her basket at Warren Street, adjusted her tortoise, and saying 'Good morning' in the usual cold and bright English fashion she left the

train. I noticed her extended hand, with the black mould on it as she went toward the illuminated 'Way Out.'

Late that night I remembered her, and I wondered if the room had been changed into a garden already. Even if he came when he was called, would he prove to be a true substitute for the dog? It was difficult to estimate the amount of feeling that lay under the leather.

As for him and his personal feeling, I saw him growing accustomed to the wooden earthen boxes round the walls of the room somewhere near Warren Street, and forgetting the immense, unspeakably immense, trees of the wood and the cool earth and the anemones, not to speak of the lost charms of the smaller beetles. Then he would tear more fiercely away from his tortoise vision the hot yellow-brown earth of a southern country, the buzzing insects, the gay company he met underground in the winter, and the sun that welcomed him when he returned in the spring, and the voluptuous feast of rose and carnation leaves to be sucked in all through the long summer days.

But there was a great marvel in this relationship. Hundreds of years lay before the tortoise. He would live a long time, outlive her.

As I reflected on this I reflected also on the great goodness of God. This time the tortoise would not die first. What holy thought had led her to a tortoise and not to another dog?

One day in a few years' time, while he was hiding in the leaves of the wooden boxes, she would die, and the neighbors coming in to contemplate the friendless corpse would look round at the sound of his stirring and say, 'What are we to do with this tortoise?'

## THE GREATER WAR

BY VALENTINE SPALDING

From the *Outlook*, November 22  
(LONDON RADICAL-LIBERAL WEEKLY)

I SLEPT. That is not surprising. I had spent some hours in mastering Professor Bamboos's latest work in which he drives home so conclusively his well-known theories on the subject of reparations and war indemnities. Arguments drawn from history and economics, with a wealth of pointed illustration, left no room for doubt that all war indemnities are a serious injury to the country exacting them, and very little injury at all — nay, a positive benefit — to the happy country paying them.

I dreamed.

That is not surprising either, for my brain was wearied with the sustained effort of mastering so complicated a thesis.

I dreamed that I was looking into a little garden somewhere near Berlin. Two men paced its paths in the chill northern spring sunshine. One was tall and stout, with a heavy, square face expressing unintelligent ferocity. He wore the uniform of a Prussian general. In fact, to be quite frank, he *was* a Prussian general. The other was even taller, very thin, and wore civilian clothes. Him I recognized as the German Chancellor. His expression was equally ferocious, but rather more intelligent. 'What!' exclaimed the General, speaking English — I do not know why (this is a dream) — 'What! you mean to tell me now, when all our plans are perfect for *Der Zweite Tag*, that when we have won we shall ruin ourselves and enrich our enemies by demanding an indemnity which you

propose to fix at 9,000,000,000,000,000, 000,000 million gold marks!' (I don't quite remember now how he expressed those figures, but that is what he meant.)

'Even so,' replied the Chancellor unmoved. ('He must have been reading Professor Bamboos too,' thought I.)

'Then what on earth are we going to war for, you blithering idiot?' continued the General with native courtesy.

His friend stooped and spoke in lower tones. He bared his teeth, a sinister figure in his ill-fitting black clothes. 'We can't exact an indemnity. *But we can force them to accept one.*'

I thought the General's efforts to adjust his mind to this new idea would result in apoplexy. He stood still for a moment with distended cheeks, then stumbled forward a few paces. At last he was able to say, 'I've heard that damned idea before somewhere.'

The Chancellor was very patient. He explained soothingly the new notions about indemnities, using all Professor Bamboos's most telling arguments. But the sun was setting before his work was done and the military mind reduced to a state of gloomy acquiescence.

'Then we can go to war and we can punish our enemies after defeating them?'

'Yes — provided we pay them enough.'

The scene changed. I was back in billets in France as I had been in 1915. The second World War was in full

blast. Every horror was intensified, poison gas more poisonous than ever, high explosives more highly explosive than ever. The sky was dark with airplanes dropping death and destruction in every conceivable form. A large bomb fell near me and exploded with a feeble puff. I expected a new and peculiarly deadly form of gas. Nothing seemed to be coming from it — not a fume. Curiosity overcame fear, and I advanced to examine it, carefully adjusting my gas-mask. The bomb was filled with treasury notes. I hurriedly pocketed them before anyone saw me. Evidently an absent-minded German munition worker had put his week's wages in a bomb in mistake for explosive. I pictured with pleasure his arriving home on Saturday night and handing his Frau a slab of nitro-glycerine for the week's house-keeping.

Corporal O'Flaherty stumbled up against me looking furtive. His pockets were bulging. Also he crackled as he came in contact with me. 'Sorry, sorr, just off to the canteen.'

For the next few days the whole British Army seemed to have money to burn. Then we saw through the game. The enemy were not going to wait till they had beaten us. They were going to give us the money now. The Allied General Staff rose to the occasion, but it took some time to explain the position to the rank and file. I don't believe Corporal O'Flaherty ever really grasped it.

We threw the money back into the German trenches in specially constructed cases supplied in a wonderfully short space of time by the Ministry of Munitions. Our airplanes carried up all the bullion in the Bank of England and dropped it on Berlin within seven days. We suffered a severe setback when a German flier dropped the entire wealth of the Stinnes

family straight into the strongrooms of the Bank of England in the form of well-chosen gilt-edged securities. British credit throughout the world reeled beneath the shock and the cost of living went up twenty-seven points during the next month. The bank rate went up violently, or else down, I forget which, but either way it was a frightful disaster. Across the trenches we hurled lumps of eighteen-carat gold at each other; we wasted no time with such puerilities as hand grenades and poison gas.

'The rifle, the trench mortar, and the battleship,' wrote the *Daily Mail* in a leading article, 'are now as démodé as the crossbow and the pike.' An agitation to convert all our munition factories into mints and establishments for printing paper money was soon successful. The *Daily Mail* described itself for some weeks as 'The paper that Got the Dibs.'

No patriotic person would now be seen wearing the smallest article of jewelry. Watches, rings, brooches, bracelets, tiepins, necklaces, were all sent to the Ministry of Munitions to find their way to the front and be hurled ruthlessly at the Germans. The mud of Flanders was prickly with them.

It was an heroic moment when a party of English matrons two thousand strong went out to France and discharged their wedding-rings simultaneously at the demoralized Huns.

After an air raid London looked as if it had been the scene of a colossal paper chase. Bank notes of every nationality blew about the streets in myriads. It was difficult to explain to the less educated classes what harm they did their country by picking up the notes and concealing them for future use.

An intensive campaign was undertaken by a committee of our leading

advertising men. The advertising manager of the Pelman schools was particularly active and imaginative in composing slogans to discourage the acquisition of money by the public in any form. It was he who suggested that the advertisement hoardings should be placarded with portraits of all the leading millionaires of the world and beneath each the legend:—

'Does he look happy?' 'No! Why?  
His income is £10,000,000 a year.'  
TAKE CARE YOU DON'T GET RICH.

Another stunt was an adaptation of an old idea, 'The Boy, what will he become — A Miserable Millionaire or a Happy Hooligan?' with two appropriate series of pictures illustrating the spendthrift's cheerful progress, and on the other hand the miserable descent of the prig into the abysses of wealth.

The Government heavily subsidized the production of *Patience* simply because it contains the lines:—

Money, I despise it,  
But many people prize it,

and paid claquees to burst into thunderous applause each time the words were sung.

But still ignorant people continued to pick up treasury notes in the street and take them home; so hard do old superstitions die.

In my dream I was now transported to Central Africa.

Outside his kraal King B'ong was sitting reading the latest available copy of the *Daily Mail*. A top hat several sizes too small was perched on the back of his head. For the rest he wore the costume of his country.

King B'ong was smiling pleasantly. The true nature of modern warfare was dawning upon his savage intelligence. He decided to be in it.

In a few days he had raised an army of fifty thousand powerful African warriors for a descent upon Europe. The ignorant fellows were armed with rifles and even assagais. I laughed as I pictured their helplessness before a well-directed volley of Dunlop debentures, and pitied them as I laughed.

Then my dream, as dreams do, changed from coherence to fantastic absurdity. I saw these savages marching successfully through Europe regardless of the fact that so much wealth was showered upon them that they must in reality have been utterly ruined. Their foreign trade would have been destroyed. They could have exported nothing in their deplorable condition of affluence, not even assagais or bullets. In real life the rate of exchange would have made their startling military success inconceivable.

But they marched on totally disregarding the latest conclusions of political economy. King B'ong stood beneath the Arc de Triomphe clad in complete golden armor and proclaiming himself the Emperor of Europe.

At this moment the book lying on my knees fell heavily to the floor and I awoke.

It was as well, or who knows what absurdity I might have dreamed next? Oh, the relief of returning to the world of Professor Bamboos and sanity!

## THE GAS WAR

### EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A CITIZEN OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

BY PIERRE MILLE

From *Le Temps*, November 9  
(SEMIOFFICIAL OPPORTUNIST DAILY)

EUROPE passed the first twenty years after the Great War of 1914 in the expectation of a new warlike cataclysm, which was believed to be impending for the simple reason that it is horribly difficult to imagine that to-morrow will not be like yesterday in every respect. Not a hundred persons in a million were clever enough to see that this very fear, together with the memory of the sufferings caused by the last war, would be enough to keep the cataclysm from beginning.

Time passed, and new generations grew up which were used to peace because they had never seen anything but peace, and in consequence imagined it to be the normal and definite state of humanity. This was the critical and dangerous instant. Some nations no longer remembered anything but their past glory and the influence, now diminished, which they had formerly exercised in determining the destinies of the world. They no longer remembered how much they had suffered in losing that influence. They believed that there was something to gain in a new struggle. A romantic literature, dolorously proud, fostered the sentiment. In contrast with them, their former adversaries had followed each his own way, because each had internal problems to solve which bore scant resemblance to the others'. The upshot was that war broke out one day bluntly

and brutally, because no one thought about it any more.

Three fourths of a century and a little more had passed since the last war. It was the year 1999. Somebody is sure to demand what the League of Nations did upon this occasion. It did very little, and for the same old reason. Lacking imagination, men continued not to believe. The League was an organization such as had never been seen before, which could not possibly serve any purpose. At most it could be asked to watch over white men's treaties or take care that Negroes should get good tobacco and leave alcohol for the white men. Strict impartiality requires us to add that this lack of imagination was perhaps more remarkable in certain countries — one lying beyond the Channel, for example — than in France itself.

There was, however, no declaration of war, that being a custom which had fallen into disuse together with the greater part of the old diplomacy. Without any warning, some highly perfected airships — whose nitro-glycerin motors, which had long replaced the cumbersome and relatively ineffective gasolene motors, permitted an incredible speed and range of action — flew over the territories of the warring nations.

Nameless terror seized the civilian populations. As harmful and even

deadly gases had been used during the last conflict, and as since then chemistry had followed up such an interesting and commendable line of progress, there was a universal conviction that this war would be 'a war of gas.' People were not mistaken, though this may seem extraordinary to those rather rare, though often perspicacious, individuals who believe that nothing ever happens if it is expected. But we must remember that the genius of military gentlemen is no more capable of conceiving novelty than the genius of unarmed citizens — perhaps still less. The strategists on both sides, therefore, made use of gas, for the excellent reason that that was what they had done before. They devoted their intelligence wholly to using more gas in bigger doses, spread by flying machines of greater and greater capacity, carrying more and more voluminous projectiles. For the human mind scarcely exerts itself outside the thoughts that are already known, and this is what is called invention. (To the eyes of a more detached observer there might seem less difference than we should at first be tempted to suppose between those industries of which we are so proud and the industries of ants or bees. Ours are almost as unchanging as theirs.)

Nevertheless the results obtained by the gas war were fairly considerable. One may say that they profoundly modified the face of social and political Europe, established between the peoples new and singularly unexpected relationships which to us, who live in the twenty-first century, seem by no means inferior to the old state of things — though this may simply be because we are used to them.

The capitals, the great cities, the industrial centres of all nations engaged in war, were destroyed. Manchester was no more favored than the country

around Lille, Roubaix, and Tourcoing, nor did Paris escape any better than London or Berlin. Great numbers of civilians perished, miserably suffocated — though not so many as one might have thought, because in the first hours of danger, at the express invitation of their governments, all the inhabitants of cities of any importance abandoned them to go and live in the woods, in tents or such shelters as could be rapidly constructed by the ingenious profiteers of the new war, the refugees paying excessive prices for such temporary dwellings as enabled them to live in any degree of comfort. The forests of Saint-Germain, of Compiègne, of Villers-Cotterets, cast their protecting cloak over the Parisians. The people of northern France took refuge in the Ardennes. As for the farmers, they all stayed at home — or, rather, in their fields. The military aircraft could no more cover the immense space of the fields with gas than they could make the Atlantic Ocean taste like grog by dumping a couple barrels of rum into it; and so the agricultural production of France diminished very little, while the food supply of the great cities which had now been set up in the forest could be reorganized easily enough. England, being far more industrialized and unable to supply herself with food, suffered a good deal more as a result of submarine war, which flourished equally. But soon there became apparent a fact so great and surprising that no one had ever foreseen it, believing that it was highly improbable. None the less, the evidence was unmistakable. There was no need at all for the civil population of France to take refuge in the forests. All they needed to do was to settle at the front, where security was absolute.

This may call for some explanation. During the twentieth century Germany's opponents occupied the Rhine

provinces. Nobody knows exactly why — and this, no doubt, is the reason why the occupation kept up eternally. To tell the truth, the Socialists and Labor parties in France and Belgium demanded in their respective Chambers each year the evacuation of these provinces. But everyone, including the Socialists and Labor men, understood that this was a purely formal gesture, like refusing to vote the budget. The front, therefore, in France and Belgium, was the left, and in some places even the right, bank of the Rhine, all the way from Holland to Switzerland. During three quarters of a century, however, this region had by no means lost its nationality. It had remained perfectly German, being administered by the Reich authorities according to the spirit and the letter of the treaties. We French kept soldiers there, and that was all.

Strange to say, this was a great stroke of good luck, which turned out to be one of the most consoling facts about the war. If, like Alsace, these provinces had been made more or less French, the German command would not have hesitated to spread death and devastation from the air; but they remained peopled with faithful patriots. To ravage and slay them would have alienated their sympathies. One did not dare to.

The result was that, while the interior of France and the inoffensive people there were sprinkled from the skies in the most disagreeable fashion, the front remained a domain of peace and felicity and a kind of miraculous paradise. There was no fighting except at the very edge, over toward the east, behind an uninterrupted line of trenches which neither of the adversaries could break — all according to the principles laid down in the last war. In fact here, as everywhere, the lack of imagination characteristic of man-

kind had prevented innovation in anything at all. On each side reserve troops with some three to four months' training fought each other, and turned out to be worth neither more nor less than warriors who had served seven years in barracks. Artillery now had a range of two hundred kilometres, but the Germans dared not use it against German cities, and the more the range increased, by an incomprehensible paradox, — though it might have been foreseen from the events of the previous war, — the more peacefully did the combatants dwell in the trenches, where they faced each other some fifty centimetres apart.

The unfortunate civilians in the interior, however, were not slow to appreciate the situation. There was a general exodus toward the undisturbed Rhine provinces where one could enjoy peace and quiet. These districts received almost thirty million Frenchmen. The Rhinelanders, though at first disturbed, in a short time were delighted, for their industry and commerce profited.

This new war lasted twenty-seven years without the possibility of coming to what it is conventional to call 'a decision.' While the French had settled along the Rhine, the Germans in the interior of Germany, who naturally got back as much gas as they sent over to us, — all of which did no good at all, because the armies were not conquered, and because in time of war conquering armies is all that matters, — and who found the gas no more agreeable than we did, for the most part made up their minds to leave by the Baltic ports for Russia, which had long since become a federated republic of peaceful peasants who absolutely refused to take part in any conflict whatever. The Germans, who likewise migrated by millions, settled among these people, taught them the habits of

industrialism, gave them the instinct of administrative regularity, and made their country prosperous.

As has been seen, we French were not badly off. Indeed, we fared very well. A city of ten million souls, a curious mixture of French and German, grew up along the Rhine, in that immense valley whose geographic situation seems to have been destined, since the dawn of early geologic eras, to play that rôle. The people came to speak a strange jargon which is becoming a new language whose future may be considerable.

As I write these lines, peace has not

been made. Perhaps it will never be made. Through sheer force of habit the aviators keep on dumping gas and bombs on places where there have been no people for fifty years. As to the armies, though these have now been reduced to the minimum strictly necessary, they are still there, guarding the trenches. The inhabitants of England have all departed to the United States, and have been replaced by a few Irish emigrants, who understand how to raise wheat and potatoes, and with whom the Germans have no quarrel.

Yet, after all, people keep on living.

## DUBIOUS REMINISCENCES

BY SIR JAMES BARRIE

From the *Times*, November 13  
(LONDON CONSERVATIVE DAILY)

[In spite of his announcement a year or two ago that his first public address should be his last, Sir James Barrie keeps right on making charming after-dinner speeches. His latest exploit was to join with Winston Churchill in discussing the relation of literature and journalism at a dinner of the Printers' Pension Corporation. So gravely did he deliver his extraordinary series of reminiscences that one auditor is said to have departed murmuring doubtfully, 'But he can't have known Napoleon!']

MAJOR ASTOR, your Royal Highness, gentlemen — especially Mr. Churchill (*laughter*), — What worries me is those two suspicious objects that have been put upon the table in front of me. (*Laughter*.) [Two microphones had been placed on the table to broadcast

the speeches.] I do not know what they are, but I presume that one of them represents Literature, and the other the Press. (*Laughter*.) I think we should all feel very beholden to an eminent politician for coming here and talking to us so delightfully about literature and the press, especially at a moment when the country is on the eve of a General Election (*laughter*) — I mean to vote this time. (*Laughter*.) But, though Mr. Churchill has been very nice about it, I know the real reason why I have been asked to reply for this toast. It is because I am the oldest person present. (*Laughter*.) Many years ago I saw, in an American 'Whitaker,' my name in a list headed 'Interesting Octogenarians' (*loud laughter*), and I think therefore that the best thing I can do is to give you

some literary recollections of far-past days. (*Laughter and cheers.*) I dare say I may sometimes get a little muddled between past and present, between father and son, but then I notice that you have done that also to-night. (*Laughter.*) You have been congratulating Mr. Churchill on being Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of course, it was his father who was that. (*Laughter.*) I will tell you a secret — I know quite well what has been happening to Mr. Churchill, and I think that he is only wearing the laurels that he has so splendidly earned. (*Cheers.*) But let us couple with him to-night the father (*cheers*), who must be proud of his boy. (*Hear, hear.*)

Those of you who are at present writing your reminiscences, and that must mean the greater number of you (*laughter*), I warn you that there is not much use in having reminiscences nowadays unless you can remember Robert Louis Stevenson. (*Laughter.*) The only time I met Stevenson was in Edinburgh, and I had no idea who he was. It was in the winter of '79. I well remember the wind was 'blawin' snell' when I set off that afternoon with my notebooks to the Humanities class of the University of Edinburgh. As I was crossing Princes Street — a blasty corner — I ran against another wayfarer. Looking up, I saw that he was a young man of an exceeding tenuity of body, his eyes, his hair, already beginning to go black (*laughter*), and that he was wearing a velvet jacket. He passed on, but he had bumped against me, and I stood in the middle of the street, regardless of the traffic, and glared contemptuously after him. (*Laughter.*)

He must have grown conscious of this, because he turned round and looked at me. I continued to glare. He went on a little bit, and turned round again. I was still glaring, and he came back and said to me, quite nicely,

'After all, God made me.' (*Loud laughter.*) I said, 'He is getting careless.' (*Renewed laughter and cheers.*) He lifted his cane, and then, instead, he said, 'Do I know you?' He said it with such extraordinary charm that I replied, wistfully, 'No, but I wish you did.' (*Laughter.*) He said, 'Let's pretend I do,' and we went off to a tavern at the foot of Leith Street, where we drank what he said was the favorite wine of the Three Musketeers. (*Laughter.*) Each of us wanted to pay (*laughter*), but it did not much matter, as neither of us had any money. (*Laughter.*)

We had to leave that tavern without the velvet coat and without my class books. When we got out it was snowing hard, and we quarreled — something about Mary Queen of Scots. (*Laughter.*) I remember how he chased me for hours that snowy night through the streets of Edinburgh, calling for my blood. (*Laughter.*) That is my only reminiscence of R. L. S., and I dare say that even that will get me into trouble. (*Laughter.*)

It may interest Major Astor to know that I was the man who bought the first copy of the *Times* containing the news of the victory of Waterloo. (*Laughter.*) I happened to be passing Printing House Square at the time, and I vividly remember the editor leaning far out of his window to watch the sales (*laughter*), and I heard him exclaim exultantly, 'There goes one copy, at any rate!' (*Laughter.*) Waterloo! I never knew Napoleon in his great days (*laughter*), but I chanced to be lodging in the same house that he came to, as you remember, as a stripling, just for a week, when he was trying to get a clerkship in the East India Company. (*Laughter.*) The old connection between France and Scotland brought us together. I remember well taking him one evening to Cremorne Gardens,

then at the height of its popularity, and introducing him to a stout friend of mine, whom some of you may remember, Jos Sedley. What fun we had in the fog driving Jos home in his coach to Russell Square! Napoleon was singing gayly, and Jos was bulging out of both windows of the coach at once. (*Loud laughter.*) This is perhaps only interesting as being the first encounter between these two figures, who were afterwards to meet on the tented field. (*Laughter.*) Napoleon, as is now generally known, did not take up that clerkship in the East India Company. (*Laughter.*) I dissuaded him from it. (*Loud laughter.*) Looking back, I consider that this was one of my mistakes. (*Laughter.*)

Gentlemen, the unenviable shades of the great, who have to live on here after they have shed this mortal tenement! Not for them the dignity of dying and being forgotten, which is surely the right of proud man! Who knows but that where they are fame is looked upon as a rather sordid achievement? The freer spirits may look upon those immortals with pity, because they have to go on dragging a chain here on earth. It may be that the Elysian Fields are not a place of honor, but of banishment!

'Literature and the Press!' It is a noble toast, and never can it be drunk more fittingly than in honor of the best friend that literature and the press ever had — the printer. (*Cheers.*) All seems well with the press. We are gathered to-night round a chairman not unconnected with a journal of which we can perhaps say, without vainglory, that it is a possession which all the nations envy us. (*Loud cheers.*) The press nowadays, as Mr. Churchill has said, takes all the world in its span. I cannot look at Mr. Churchill, because I

have been told to look at these two things [the microphones] (*laughter*), but one who was very lately a Lord Chancellor, and now another, a Chancellor of the Exchequer, have both — I do not know whether Mr. Churchill is beginning to look a little nervous about what I am going to say next (*laughter*) — all I am going to say is in glorification of the press — when it is garbed in its Sunday best (*laughter*) — they are the two brightest jewels on its proud bosom.

Literature, when it can be heard at all above the syrens — Mr. Churchill has had a good deal to say about literature and the press, and has found that they are very much the same thing. He used an expression about there being no arbitrary dividing line between literature and the press. I should like to give a definition of what I think is the arbitrary dividing line (*laughter*) just in half a dozen words. It is this — Literature used to be a quiet bird. All, I think, is very well with literature, especially with the young authors. From its looms comes much brave literature, devised by cunning hands, women's equally with men's. There is no question whether a woman is worthy of a place in our Cabinet. Those young authors! All hail to them! Happy they! Multitudinous seas incarnadine boil in their veins. They hear the thousand nightingales which we once thought we heard. They have a short way with the old hands, but in our pride in them we forgive them for that. (*Laughter and cheers.*) Perhaps they sometimes go a little to excess, treating even God as if He were, shall we say, the greatest of the Victorians. (*Laughter and cheers.*)

I thank you for listening to me so patiently. (*Loud cheers.*)

## A PAGE OF VERSE

### SALLY BLACK AND GEORDIE GREEN

BY WILFRID GIBSON

[*Spectator*]

OH where may you be going with your black mare sleeked so shinely,  
With her four hoofs newly varnished and her feathers combed so clean,  
With her mane and tail straw-plaited, pranked so gay and smart and nattily  
With red and yellow ribbons tied in lovelocks, Geordie Green?

*I be going to the Fair  
With my mare.*

Oh, won't you take me with you, for I 've never been to Stagshaw Bank,  
Nor a hiring nor a hopping though I 'm nearly seventeen,  
And I 've never had a fairing, faldalal nor whigmaleerie, nor  
A red and yellow ribbon for my lovelocks, Geordie Green?

*I can't manage but one mare  
At the Fair.*

Now what can you be fearing — and I but a young lassie, too,  
And you a lad of twenty? But if so it be you 're mean,  
I 've saved up thirteen pennies, so no need to fear I 'll beggar you  
Or be beholding to you for one farthing, Geordie Green?

*I 'll be getting to the Fair  
With my mare.*

Then gan your gait and luck to you at Stagshaw Bank, your mare and you:  
But maybe you 'll be ruining when you see me like a queen,  
In Farmer Dodd's new dogcart, with the shafts and spokes picked out with red,  
Overtake you on the road there and flash by you, Geordie Green.

*Yet I 'll happen reach the Fair  
With my mare.*

## LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

### STRINDBERG AS A SCULPTOR'S MODEL

FOR a representative of *Idun*, the Swedish weekly for women, which first discovered and launched Selma Lagerlöf, Carl Eldh, the Stockholm sculptor, who made over a dozen statues of Strindberg during his lifetime, has related how he became acquainted with the writer and how he induced him to pose.

'Our acquaintance first began in 1902,' said the artist. 'I had a studio near Karlaplan, where Strindberg lived, but as I had recently returned from Paris I did not know him at first. His intimate associates at that time were Richard Bergh, the painter, and Tor Aulin. With these two, his brother Axel, who was a pianist, and Carlheim-Gyllensköld, he used to arrange musicales at his home. I had made a bust of Richard Bergh, and when Strindberg saw it he sent word through Bergh that I should be welcome at his house. I went, and we became fast friends. At these musicales only Beethoven was played, and afterward Strindberg gave us a simple supper. Only men were present. He had recently been separated from Fru Bosse and was living alone. His daughter, Anne Marie, was but a little girl, and when I finally ventured to ask him to pose for a small bust he brought the child along the first time he came.'

'He rose early in the mornings, and so did I. We got up at six, and at half-past seven he used to come and pose for twenty minutes or half an hour. He was always punctual, and if he was delayed, though only for five minutes, he always sent a card telling me when he would come.'

'After that I was a guest at his house every week until his death. An author

and a sculptor, of course, went well together. There was not the slightest cause for friction. From his books it is hardly possible to understand how cordial, how tender, and how delicate he could be. At times he kicked out his friends, but such things had to be overlooked.'

'From Karlaplan he moved to the "Blue Tower," and became more gloomy and uncommunicative than ever. He would peek out through the curtains when anyone knocked. We kept up our relationship, however, and he asked me to help him study cloud-formations, which he later wrote about in the Blue Books. He believed certain formations recurred at definite times, and asked me to photograph the sky whenever there were clouds at certain hours. Of course we made no conclusive discovery, but in the future more than one grain of truth may be found among all those ideas of his which once seemed absurd.'

'It was remarkable how he sensed things. At times when you approached his house he would meet you in the doorway and say, "I knew you would come to-day."

'You want to know what he thought of the busts? He was merely satisfied. When he posed he used to talk about everything, and ask about everything. During his later years he read no newspapers, but wanted to know about everything that happened, from current events to new art. He had a primitive feeling for art, and he could become enthusiastic about the most banal things, but he liked to visit art exhibits when no one else was there.'

'You ought to have seen his room! How plain and Spartanlike his sur-

roundings were! Once he said, "I feel most at home in a hotel, where there is nothing personal."

"He left a big void when he died. It was a comfort to have him there. Merely to know that he was alive was an inspiration."



#### LITERARY RELATIONS OF FRANCE AND AUSTRIA

THE Austrian novelist, Paul Zifferer, now an attaché at the Austrian legation in Paris, has been interviewed by *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* on the Austrian attitude toward French literature during and since the war.

'M. Paul Zifferer tells us,' says the French interviewer, 'that the Austrian interest in French literature never was broken off. Before the war everything that appeared in France was read, and French plays were produced. Even during the war intellectual relations did not cease, and Austria showed herself interested in our literary activity just as she had always been. To-day, as in 1914, everything that goes on in France is followed in Austria. International courses are given at the University of Vienna, French actors and actresses are received with enthusiasm. There is a general interest in Austria in all literary affairs, and all the leading newspapers carry a literary column above the political article on the first page, in which French authors receive as much attention as Austrian.'



#### THE DEATH OF GEORGE ELIOT'S HUSBAND

JOHN WALTER CROSS, who became the husband of Marian Evans—or George Eliot—after the death of George Henry Lewes, recently died in England at the age of eighty-four, one of the last links binding our turbulent

twentieth century to the great days of Victoria. Mr. Cross's acquaintance with the famous novelist dated from a meeting in Rome in 1869, indirectly through Herbert Spencer, who was an old friend of the Cross family.

The *Times* gives the following account of their marriage and life together:—

When, on November 28, George Henry Lewes died, George Eliot saw no one for many weeks except Mrs. Charles Lewes and persons whom it was necessary to receive on business, and it was not till February 23, 1879, that Cross, who was himself in deep sadness, having lost his mother a week after the death of Lewes, saw George Eliot again. He did not see her often until toward the end of April, soon after which they entered on a close and laborious study of Dante, which Cross, who then had little knowledge of Italian, had taken up after his mother's death, feeling the need of fresh mental occupation.

George Eliot visited the Crosses at Weybridge at the end of March, 1880, and again toward the end of April, when she and Cross had become engaged. They were married on May 6, and started for Paris, whence they proceeded by Grenoble and the Mont Cenis to Italy, returning by the Brunner and Innsbruck, and thence by easy stages to Mrs. Cross's house, The Heights, at Witley, on July 26. They had given up The Priory and taken No. 4, Cheyne Walk, to which they moved on December 3. They went to the Saturday Popular Concert on December 18, a very cold day. George Eliot caught a chill, and died on December 22.



#### GEORGE ARLISS DISCUSSES THE ENGLISH STAGE

INTERVIEWED at the Waterloo Station in London just as he was leaving for America to appear in Galsworthy's *Old English*, Mr. George Arliss expressed himself as rather disappointed in certain aspects of the contemporary English stage, but hopeful of its future.

'I think the plays in England to-day,' he said, 'are rather at a low ebb — more particularly the English plays. We naturally look for the best in dramatic literature from English authors, and when they fall they have a longer way to fall. Many of the best plays of the present time come from America. But this is not very serious, because every country, now and then, goes through a period of depression in all the arts.'

He was discouraged by the lack of good actresses, but found no lack of actors. 'There are a lot of clever young men coming on,' he said, 'but it is difficult to say who are going to be the big men of the future, because so many promising youngsters fizzle out. However, the future looks very promising so far as actors are concerned.'

'All in all,' Mr. Arliss added, 'the English theatre looks pretty healthy.'

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#### DIVIDING THE NOBEL PRIZES

THE recent award of the Nobel Prize to the Polish writer Wladyslaw Stanislaw Reymont stirs the *Manchester Guardian* to comment on the way in which the prizes have been divided among various countries and the reasons for some of the awards: —

One thing that must, of course, be borne in mind is that the conditions of Nobel's will lay it down that in awarding the prize for literature preference should be given to writings the tendency of which is idealistic. It is believed that it is on this ground that the Nobel Prize has never been given to d'Annunzio. Reymont, on the other hand, is essentially idealistic.

It is interesting to remember that so far the Nobel Literature Prize has been awarded only twice to English writers — to Rudyard Kipling and, last year, to W. B. Yeats — or to three if we include Tagore. France has had five awards, if we include Maeterlinck — the last of them to Anatole France in 1921. The earliest Nobel laureate

was Sully-Prudhomme, an estimable 'Parnassian' poet, whose choice has been explained by an eminent French critic, who admits that it cannot be explained by superiority over other then living writers, on the ground that it was meant as a compliment by the Swedish Academy to the French Academy! The Prize has gone four times to Germany, twice to Italy, once to Spain, once to Switzerland. It has never been awarded to Russia, though Tolstoi was alive in the years when its winners included such writers as Sully-Prudhomme, Mistral, and Echegaray.

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#### BLURBS FOR THE CLASSICS

BLURBS — those extraordinary effusions printed in flaming colors on the cover, which explain why each particular best-seller is the masterpiece for which the ages have been waiting — had long been the cause of acute disturbance in the soul of the London *Outlook*'s editor. At length he offered a prize for the best blurb that might have been written — if that happy age had not been unaware of blurbs — when *Jane Eyre* was first published.

This is the effort that carried off the first prize: —

When *Jane Eyre*, the prim little orphanage-bred governess at Thornfield Hall, carries off the affections of its apparently eligible master under the nose of an accomplished county beauty, she should surely have been allowed to enjoy married life with no further difficulties than those supplied by Rochester's saturnine temper. But her dreams of joy were rudely shattered by the same savage hands that tore her bridal veil to ribbons on the very eve of her wedding. What was the shadow that clouded Rochester's life, and the horror that walked by night in Thornfield? There is no more thrilling series of mysteries in fiction than those through which Jane walks so demurely to her ultimate happiness.

The second prize went to the following blurbesque endeavor: —

What should a young governess, who has fallen in love with her pupil's father, do when she discovers that he has a mad wife living under the same roof? This is the intensely human problem presented with almost feminine intuition by Mr. Currer Bell. In Mr. Rochester our readers will make the acquaintance of a real man. In what are perhaps the most powerful love-scenes in contemporary fiction the dross of his nature is purged at last in the fires of suffering. The quaint little heroine is almost unique. Her childhood in a girls' boarding-school is described with ruthless sincerity, and her succeeding adventures will be followed with breathless interest until she wins through into her kingdom of love.

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## MANY INVENTIONS

AN English inventor, with more enterprise than sense of humor, recently inserted in the 'Agony Column' an item announcing that a 'successful inventor invites suggestions for things that ought to be invented.' Upon this 'Lucio' of the *Manchester Guardian*, blessed with both enterprise and sense of humor, seized with whoops of pure joy. This is his list:—

I'd rather like a golf ball which would give a plaintive squeak,  
When hidden in long grass, to guide the steps of those that seek;  
I'd simply love a razor blade which did, in practice, shave  
As many times as those concerning which the adverts. rave.

I would n't mind, on winter nights, a new electric sheet  
Through which, on getting into bed, there glowed gentle heat;  
Belinda, who considers cheeks the proper place for roses,  
Would like, she says, to see an unobtrusive muff for noses.

I'd like a collar-stud which never rolled into a chink;

I'd like a fountain pen that held a pint or two of ink;

I'd like a 'phone which always gave the number it was told,

And, oh, I should be thankful for a cure to stop a cold!

I'd like a car that ran itself on kindness and fresh air;

I'd like a way of making sure that summers would be fair;

I'd like — but why extend the list? I think my little rime

Contains enough to keep the wizard busy for a time.

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## SHAKESPEARE IN FINLAND

IVAN HEDQVIST, a Swedish John Barrymore, has been giving a Shakespeare repertoire at the Swedish Theatre in Helsingfors. Concerning a portrait of him as Hamlet, painted by Nils Dardel, an art critic writes: 'The upturned, chalky-white face, with its drooping mouth and stary eyes, has been painted blood-red with horror and sulphur-yellow with anguish against a background black as sin. The resemblance is striking.' Which leads a 'colyuminist' in *Göteborgs Handels och Sjöfarts Tidning* to remark, 'Poor Hedqvist, how he must have changed!'

On his list of plays was also *The Merchant of Venice*, and as Shylock — the rôle played by Herr Hedqvist — does not appear in the last act, the actor had time to don ordinary dress before the end of the play. But in response to the eager applause, he decided to appear before the curtain just the same.

'Who is that?' asked one of the spectators, failing to recognize him without his makeup.

'That must be the author,' replied a neighbor — and the applause was renewed with extra vigor.

## BOOKS ABROAD

**Contemporary Personalities**, by the Right Hon. the Earl of Birkenhead. London: Cassell and Co., 1924. 21s.

[*Manchester Guardian*]

THIS is rather a bad case of what the coroners call 'overlaying.' The book consists of a series of personal sketches of men who are prominent in the public life of England. The Earl of Birkenhead wrote the book and the Earl of Birkenhead suffocates it. One cannot be alone with the book, but has to read it with the author leaning over one's shoulder. 'This' — the reader says to himself — 'this is what he thinks of So-and-so; what will So-and-so say when he reads it?' — for they must know one another quite well. Listen to him saying of Mr. Asquith that his character is more fluid than his intellect, and of Lord Haldane that words fall from him like snowflakes in Greenland. How will they like that? All the time one is judging the fruit by its tree. The book is like a building from which the scaffolding is never taken down — and indeed had better not be!

Lord Birkenhead is the supreme undergraduate of our time. He writes much better than a clever undergraduate, but he writes essentially like one, having a style which has been shaped much more by literature than by life, evincing considerable satisfaction with himself in the company of long words, and not hesitating to allude to Lord Leverhulme's 'saponaceous life.'

**Annals of an Active Life**, by General the Right Hon. Sir Nevil Macready, Bt., G. C. M. G., K. C. B. London: Hutchinson, 1924. Two volumes, 42s.

[*Times*]

THE author of this book is, as his title implies, a soldier. He was gazetted from Sandhurst to the Gordon Highlanders in 1881, and took part as a regimental officer in the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir — 'the last battle fought by the British Army in the time-honored red coats'; some twenty years later he was fighting in South Africa after serving in India; but it is significant that he devotes less than a fifth of his space to the period during which one conceives him in a position to hit back. His appointments continued to be military, but with the recognition of his administrative capacity it became his function less to oppose violence with violence than to keep the peace. If due regard be had to the conditions in which he worked, this generalization indicates what was required of him both as Adjutant-

General to the Forces in the war and also as Commander-in-Chief in Ireland during the subsequent disturbances, and it is specially applicable to his duties as Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police during the police strike.

Here and there are little sketches of politicians which are opportune at this time; and in these his sense of humor pays off old scores. The existence of Mr. Winston Churchill is obviously a great satisfaction to him in the abstract; and where the reader sees his name he will come by a chuckle; and he will find himself laughing with Mr. Lloyd George. We have Mr. Churchill giving Sir Nevil authority during the Welsh mining disturbances to exercise control over both police and military in the event of the latter being called upon to participate actively in quelling disorder, but 'unable to refrain from telling me where I ought to sleep on the night of the 9th.' To this high seriousness the foil is the insouciance of Mr. Lloyd George. One of many examples is furnished by the debate in the Army Council on the employment of Chinese labor in 1916; it was thought that the recollection of his attitude to Chinese labor in South Africa would weigh with Mr. Lloyd George. 'Not a bit of it. . . . Mr. Lloyd George, with a whimsical smile, agreed to the experiment, and joined heartily in the laugh that burst out round the table.'

**The Byron Mystery**, by Sir John Fox. London: Grant Richards, 1924. 10s. 6d.

[*Westminster Gazette*]

Most people who are interested in the matter must have become convinced, by this time, that there is no possibility of arriving at a definite solution of the mystery which obscures the circumstances in which the separation of Lord and Lady Byron took place. Lord Lovelace, in *Astarte*, gave us what seems to have been Lady Byron's version of the affair many years afterward, and Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, years earlier, had gone a little further. An immense mass of Byron's letters, and many of those of his wife, are available for the world at large to read; and such evidence as can be extracted from them has been used, on one side or the other, without conclusive result. The friends and the enemies of the very ill-matched couple, and of the lady who, innocently or not, has been the cause of all the subsequent controversy, Augusta Leigh, have been quoted over and over again, and still the facts are as much in dispute as ever they were. There was very little fresh material, there-

fore, on which Sir John Fox, whose father took an active part in the controversy nearly half a century ago, could draw in adding one more book to those for which Byron's habits and morals have been responsible; and the vehement condemnation of the poet which it contains is the result of little more than a re-argument of the old case.

The Byron 'Memoirs,' which it was decided to burn, might — or might not — have solved the mystery for us; but the wish of his friends for their destruction cannot have been such evidence of his guilt as we are asked to believe, for it is impossible to suppose that he could have written a confession of the crime which has been attributed to him and placed it in the hands of his publishers, presumably for posthumous publication, and equally impossible to believe that, had he done so, Lady Byron could have been willing to share with Mrs. Leigh the burden of providing a sum as compensation for their destruction. Lady Holland, who read them, said that 'they were full of the attachment,' which is hardly a strong enough expression to describe the supposed offense, and Mrs. Leigh herself had to be strongly advised to consent to the burning. We have, too, the letters to 'Dearest B' and 'Dearest Duck,' which Lady Byron, signing herself 'Ever thy most loving,' sent to her husband after she had actually left him, but before the formal separation. We have Lady Byron's subsequent friendship with Augusta and protection of her daughter Medora — a very important character in his domestic tragedy. Such things make it impossible to regard the charge against Byron as proved; but Sir John Fox's advocacy and his statement of the case are interesting.

*Mes Voyages*, by Claude Farrère. Paris: 1924.

[*'Le Masque de Fer'* in *Le Figaro*]

This new and fascinating book of Claude Farrère's describes his marvelous voyages about the world. Everyone knows that the great novelist is also a great traveler, and while the one recalls the beautiful countries he has visited, the other's touch appears in a colorful story, well documented, which draws the reader with it. Reading *Mes Voyages*, one seems to hear the voice of Claude Farrère himself talking, with all his love and emotion, about that Far East which he adores. One has, too, the impression of being carried everywhere that he has gone. This admirable talent does not merely call up a scene, it makes you see it. The author sets us down in front of the world's marvels with adroitly chosen words until he almost gives us the feeling that we have really visited them.

Musset wrote the *Theatre in an Armchair*.

Claude Farrère's last work ought to be entitled *Travels in an Armchair*.

*When We Were Very Young*, by A. A. Milne, with decorations by Ernest H. Shepard. London: Methuen and Co.; New York: Dutton, 1924. \$2.00. Limited edition, \$5.00.

[*Morning Post*]

MR. MILNE has produced a book of verses for small children which should go well in the nursery, that most drastic of all critical communities. The verses have a jingle, they tell tall and for the most part they are free from the hard words which mean nothing at all to the direct thinkers of the world, aged about seven. The original copy of one of the poems was in the Queen's Dolls' House at Wembley, about as big as a bee's wing.

One or two extracts, taken almost at random, will show what the verses are like: —

Christopher Robin goes—  
Hoppity, hoppity,  
Hoppity, hoppity, hop.  
Whenever I tell him  
Politely to stop it, he  
Says he can't possibly stop.

They're changing guard at Buckingham Palace,  
Christopher Robin went down with Alice,  
Alice is marrying one of the guard.  
'A soldier's life is terribly hard,' says Alice.

I never did, I never did, I never did like 'Now take care, dear!'

I never did, I never did, I never did want  
'Hold-my-hand';

I never did, I never did, I never did think  
much of 'Not up there, dear!'

It's no good saying it. They don't understand.

A young person who calls himself 'Billy Moon,' and seems to have some family connection with the author, inspired the book. He is a good inspirer.

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#### NEW TRANSLATIONS

FRENNSEN, GUSTAV. *Village Sermons by a Novelist*. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1924. \$1.50.

GRIMMELSHAUSEN, HANS JACOB CHRISTOFFEL VON. *Simplicissimus, the Vagabond*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1924.

HYUYSMANS, JORIS-KARL. *The Oblate*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1924. \$2.50.

LARBAUD, VALERY. *A. O. Barnabooth*. Translated from the French by Gilbert Cannan. London: Dent, 1924. 7s. 6d.

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